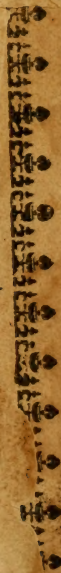


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U p o n t h e E i g h t h , N i n t h , a n d T e n t h
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O F
H O S E A .

Being
First delivered in several L E C T U R E S
at Michaels Cornhil, L O N D O N .

By Jeremiah Burroughs.

Being the Sixth Book published by

Thomas Goodwin, } William Bridge,
William Greenhil, } John Yates,
Sydrach Simpson, } Will. Adderly.

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L O N D O N :

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THE X POST
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

CONTINUED
Upon the Right, Mind, and Temper
Chapters of the P. R. O. N. A.
OF
H. O. S. E. A.

By J. W. H. S. E. A.
at M. W. H. S. E. A. L. O. N. O. N.

By J. W. H. S. E. A. L. O. N. O. N.
Being the Sixth Book published by
Thomas Goodwin, William Burleigh,
John Wain, John Wain,
John Wain, John Wain.

LONDON:
Printed by Peter Cole, at the Sign of the Printing Press,
Corinth, near the Royal Exchange, 1750.



To the
R E A D E R.

WHAT We have by way of Preface set before the Edition of the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Chapters, may sufficiently serve for a Premise to these Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Chapters, as holding forth the Use and Scope of the whol Propheſie, and the Authors Intentions in his Comment thereon: So as We ſhall only need now to give LETTERS of CREDENCE before the World, to the paſſing of Theſe, as the beſt, and moſt authentick Notes that

A 2 could

To the READER.

could any way be obtained, both as the Extracts of the best Notes of Sermons, taken from his Mouth, and chiefly his own Writings, which were more brief. Expect shortly the Eleventh, Twelfth, and Thirteenth Chapters from the same hand. We commit Them, and the Reader to the blessing of God.


*Thomas Goodwyn,
Sydrach Simpson,
William Greenhil,
William Bridge,
John Yates,
Will. Adderly.*

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The Names of several Books printed by Peter Cole, at the sign of the *Printing-Press* in Cornhil, by the Exchange, in L O N D O N.

A PHYSICAL DIRECTORY; or, a Translation of the London DISPENSATORY. Whercunto is added, The *Vertues* of the Simple and Compounds. And in the second Edition are 784. Additions: the general heads whereof are these, *Viz.* 1 The Dose (or quantity to be taken at one time) and Use, both of Simples and Compounds. 2 The Method of ordering the Body after sweating and purging Medicines. 3 Cautions (to all ignorant people) upon all Simples and Compounds that are dangerous. With many Additions in every Page, marked with the letter A.

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A N
EXPOSITION
Of the PROPHECY of
HOSEA.

CHAP. VIII.

VERS. I.

Set the Trumpet to thy mouth: he shall come as an Eagle against the House of the LORD: because they have transgressed my Covenant, and trespassed against my Law.



HE Prophet still continues the Denunciation of Judgment against Israel, with the Declaration and Aggravation of their sins.

Set the Trumpet to thy mouth.

Let there be a full, and free, and open manifestation of the sin and the danger of Israel: The same commandment that we have here to the Prophet, we have in the

the 58 of *Isa.* at the beginning to the Prophet there, *Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a Trumpet, shew my people their transgression, and the House of Jacob their sin.*

Obs. I

Ministers must not only be Trumpeters of the Gospel, Trumpeters of Mercy and Peace, but Trumpeters of Judgment and of War; they are set to give warning to people of danger, and woe to them if they do not, God will require the blood of people at their hands. However peoples spirits may be against it, against the free and bold work of the Ministry in denouncing Judgments, yet the spirits of Gods Ministers must go on in their way: *Luther* in his time for the freedom and boldness of his spirit inveighing against the sins of the times, he was called the very Trumpet of Rebellion, he inveighs against their sins and threatens Judgments, and they exclaim against him, they are as loud against him, and trumpet out their exclamations against him, calling of him the Trumpet of Rebellion and sedition. If a Town be besieged by the enemy, it is not the crying of children or women that must hinder the beating up of the Drums, nor the roaring of the Canon. God takes it exceeding ill at his Ministers hands to be mealy mouthed, when his wrath is incensed; and therefore he calls the Watchmen that did not give warning by an ignominious name, *DUMB DOGS*, that cannot bark, in *Isa.* 56. 10. I remember *Pliny* in his 29. Book, 4. Chapter, tells of the Dogs in *Rome*, that were set to keep the Capitol, because when the *Gauls* did scall the Capitol, the Dogs being fed too full, lay sleeping and did not give warning; they therefore not only hanged them up, but every year the *Romans* observed that time of the year, and on that day, hanged up certain Dogs in the City for exemplary Justice, by way of crucifying of them alive upon an Elder tree, and upon this ground it is thought that the *Romans* did so hate that kind of death, of hanging upon a tree. And therefore it was the more cursed death that *Christ* died to hang upon a tree. It is that that God is exceedingly provoked against his Watchmen for, if they give not warning.

Luther called the trumpet of rebellion

Smile

Pliny

Why crucifying on a tree was so hateful to the Romans

Hosea

Hosea had proclaimed war before this in the name of the Lord, but he must do it again; from whence the Note is further. Expof. 3.

That Gods Ministers must not be weary of their work though they see little good come of it; yea so far from being weary or discouraged as their spirits must rise up in their intentions strength and fervency of it. Obfer. 2.

Before *Hosea's* voice was the voice of a man; but now it is the sound of a Trumpet: Let wickedness stop her mouth, but let the mouths of Gods Servants be opened, yea let a Trumpet be set against their mouths in disclaiming against the wickedness of the times wherein they live. The para-
phrase.

Thirdly, The denunciation of threatening in the Name of God, it is a terrible sound, if men be not afraid of this Trumpet, and awakened by it, there is a time that shall awaken them, when a Trumpet (I say) shall awaken them and make them afraid, when the Arch Angel shall blow his Trumpet, those that are most awakned and fears the sound of this Trumpet shall have the most comfort when the Trumper of the Arch Angel shall blow. Obf. 3.

He shall come as an Eagle.

Luther upon the place thinks this Propheſie meant against Judah, because of the naming of the *House of the Lord*, as follows after. And then this Eagle must be understood of *Nebuchadnezzar*, who is called an *Eagle* in *Ezek. 17. 3.* and *Jer. 48. 40.* But rather I think it to be meant of the *Assyrian*, for the Prophet here is prophesying against the ten Tribes, and he seems to take away the two great confidences that they had whereby they hoped that they were not in so great danger. Luther

The first was, that they had made a league with *Egypt* which was nigh hand, as for the *Assyrian* he was a great way off, and there was not so much danger to be thought of the *Assyrians*. Author.

2. Secondly : As they imagined they had the house of the Lord with them, and did worship the true God. Now the Prophet takes away these two, *He shall come as an Eagle, against the House of the Lord*: that is, the Assyrian, *Salmaneser* he is called an Eagle, and because he was to come with an Army, therefore an Eagle; (and it may be his Ensign might be an Eagle) you know the parts of Armies are called Wings, and so is compared to an Eagle, to shew to them that their danger is not so far off as they imagined. *He shall come as an Eagle*, that is swiftly, with a mighty force and vehemency; and he shall have an Eagles spirit, an Eagles eye: the Eagle is quick sighted, and the spirit of an Eagle is not easily daunted: and yet it is observable that in the Law the Eagle was an unclean bird, though the Eagle the King of Fowls, and of a brave spirit, yet he was unclean, God would not have the Eagle offered in sacrifice, but rather the Dove, God many times doth not regard Eagles spirits, those that soare aloft and fly on high, but he doth receive Dove-like spirits, such as are of meek and quiet spirits.

The Assyrians Army, why an Eagle.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Why the Eagle was unclean under the Law.

Obs. God accepts not Eagles, but Doves.

But he shall come as an Eagle swiftly, that is upon the prey before it is aware.

Obs. I.

Men flatter themselves when danger is at any distance from them, if it be not just upon them, then think themselves safe, but God can bring evil suddenly and irresistably upon them. In *Isa. 5. 26. He will lift up an Ensign to the Nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth: and behold, they shall come with speed swiftly. Gualter* upon this place applies it to the Turks coming into some part of Germany, they were come on a sudden from the uttermost part of Europe, yea from *Asia*, and so *Spain* and *Secily*, and *Italy*; God, to punish the contempt of the Gospel, brought them suddenly upon them. Howsoever the Lord hath delivered us hitherto from forreign Nations, we think our selves secure because God hath put work enough into their hands for the present, the Danes, French, Spaniards,

Gualt.

Applied to England,

niards, but how eaſily is it for the Lord in an inſtant when there is no fear of them at all, to bring them ſwiftly.

Secondly, *All the ſwiftheſs, and fierceneſs and quick-fightedneſs, and ſpirit of an enemy is from the Lord*: If an enemy be ſwift in his courſe, and quick-fighted and fierce, and hath a ſtrong ſpirit we are to attribute this from the Lord. Obſ. 2

Thirdly, *Wicked men in ſatisfying their rage and malice, they are as Eagles; much more ſhould we be in our ſervice, we ſhould not be ſlow*: if they be to ſatiſfie their rage as Eagles, we ſhould imitate them in this to be much more ſo in the ſervice of God. But it follows, Obſ. 3.

He ſhall come as an Eagle againſt the Houſe of the Lord.

Interpreters differ much about this, *Againſt the Houſe of the Lord*: becauſe *Hoſea* propheſied againſt the ten Tribes, therefore *Luther* and divers others think that this claufe muſt be meant againſt Judah, as if God threatning *Israel* ſhould ſay, do not you think to eſcape, for the enemy ſhall come as an Eagle even againſt the houſe of the Lord. But we need not ſtrain it ſo, for it may be meant againſt the ten Tribes notwithstanding this expreſſion, upon this ground: becauſe they called that place, the *Eminent place*, where one of their Calves were ſet up, they call'd it *Bethel*, the Houſe of God: and ſo ironically here the houſes of their Idols may be called the Houſe of the Lord, becauſe they choſe thoſe Houſes and Places inſtead of the Houſe of the Lord. *He will come againſt the Houſe of the Lord*; that is, againſt that which you account ſo. But I think that is not ſatisfactory, but rather this: the Church of *Israel* though very corrupt, yet before their actual divorce, is call'd the Houſe of the Lord, ſo that from thence then the note is: Luther.
Author.
I

That God doth not preſently caſt away a Church ſo as to unchurch it though they may be guilty of many heinous ſins. Great ſins do not ipſo facto, do not unchurch a Church, therefore there ſhould be much patience before any do decline from a Church. 2.
Obſ. 1.

Church by way of renouncing it.

Obf. 2. It is a high expreffion of the priviledg of a Church, that it is the *House of the Lord*, wherefoever there is any true Church, yea though it be very corrupt. But you will fay, What do you mean by a true Church? I take it for the present nothing but this: Any company of Saints in body to fet up what Ordinance of God they know, that's a Church wherefoever it is, and here God dwels, here God

A true Church. keeps house; and it is good keeping house with God; He is worse than an Infidel that provides not for his own house: certainly God will provide for his own House: *Moses* was faithful in al the *House of God*; that is, in all the Church of God: What then though thou dwellest in a poor Cottage, so be it thou beest a Member of the Church of God? if God give thee this blessing to dwell in his own House, you are well enough. In *Pfal. 26. 8.* *Lord I have loved the habitation of thy House, and the place where thine Honor dwelleth.* The

Use. *To good dwelling in Gods house.* Church is not only Gods House, but the House wherein the Honor of God dwelleth. Princes may have some houses where they may retire to for a time, but they have some principal Houses to shew their magnificence and glory; and such a house is the Church of God unto the Lord; all then that are in the Church, especially Officers, must behave themselves and be faithful in the Church as in the House of God, *He will come against the House of the Lord.*

Pf. 26. 8. explained. Though we be Gods House, yet the enemies may be suffered to come upon us, it will not serve us if we transgress the Covenant: *Joab* was pluck'd from the horns of the Altar; and so may we be pluck'd even out of the House of God; Gods own House is no security to sin and wickedness. It follows.

Officers of the Church.

Obf. 3.

Because they have transgressed my Covenant.

God loves to cleer his Justice, and to shew what the cause of the evil is that comes upon us, he would have it cleerly charged

charged upon our ſelves, that we may not put it off to Gods Decree, that we are predeſtinated to ſuch and ſuch evils, but the Lord hath his time to charge all the evils that comes upon ſinners, upon themſelves; *Thy deſtruction is of thy ſelf*; the bond that is between God and his Church, it is his Covenant, and all the good or evil of a Church depends upon the Covenant; and therefore it was the way alwaies of the people of God when they were far declined from God, to return unto him by way of renewing Covenant; in *Pſal. 25. 10. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth to them that keep his Covenant*; and eſpecially all our good now depends upon the Covenant more than formerly the good of the people of the Jews did, becauſe the Lord hath ſealed the Covenant now with the blood of Jeſus Chriſt actually, which was not ſo then. But for this expreſſion we had it formerly, and ſomewhat was ſpoken about the opening of the Covenant of the Jews and what kind of Covenant it was, but yet not then fully opened, and as then I ſaid, ſo ſtill I look at it as a Point that will require a particular Exerciſe of its ſelf.

The good of Chriſtians depends upon the Covenant more than formerly.

And treſpaſſed againſt my Law.

Saith Calvin upon the place, further to convince them, to ſhew that it was not through ignorance that they did tranſgreſs, they could not ſay, Lord, what is thy Covenant? for ſaith God, I did make it known cleerly in my Law, they had it plainly ſet out in my Law: The Hea-then can know the mind of God no otherwiſe but only by looking into the book of the Creature, and there the mind of God is written but very darkly, & they can ſee but little of it there: I but ſaith God, my people have my Law where my mind is written plainly, and they may ſee it there and know what my Covenant is with them, and therefore their ſin is ſo much the greater, they have tranſgreſſed againſt my Law. The Seventy tranſlate theſe words, *They have*

Calvin

deale

The 70. dealt ungodlily against my Law: and the word especially
 טָהַר טָהַר וּבִ-
 מִן מִן הִסֵּ-
 בִּעוּר. hath reference to the worship of God that is commanded
 in the Law, they have not worshiped me according to my
 Law; for though God looks at every part of his Law, yet
 more especially at that that requires his more immediate
 worship. And in the Hebrew it is, they have *prevaricated* a-

Prevari-
cati.

וְכָד

gainst my Law, they have made a shew that they would do
 what my Law requires but they do quite contrary, that's
 the propriety of the word in the Hebrew. What people is
 there in the world but will make some shew, that they
 would obey Gods Law? no people but say it is fit that they
 should be obedient to Gods Law, what variety of opinions
 and practices are there among men, and yet all will father
 their opinions and practices upon Gods Law? and mark,
 but they do prevaricate in this; they pretend one thing
 but they go quite the contrary way, and this is that which
 God charges his people withal, upon which he would send
 his enemies, even an Eagle upon them. It follows.

VER. 2.

Israel shall cry unto me, My God, we know thee.

The Heb.
reading.

THE words as they are in the Hebrew are somewhat
 different from what they are in your books, for Isra-
 el in your books is in the first place, but in the Hebrew it is
 in the last, that is, *To me they shall cry, My God, we know*
thee, Israel: What difference is this? yes, the words thus
 read have more elegancy in them than otherwise, and they
 hint some observations that would hardly be hinted to us
 as it is in your books, as thus:

If you read it as it is in your books, then it is only a
 speech of God to them.

But if you read it according to the Hebrew, they shall cry
 to me, My God, we know thee, Israel: They here seem to
 put God in mind who they were, as if they should say, we
 are Israel who know thee, remember we are not strangers

to thee; *They ſhall cry unto me, My God, we know thee, Iſrael:* It's Iſrael that cries to thee, Oh my God!

Or as if they ſhould put God in mind of their Father Iſrael in whom their confidence was; *They ſhall cry to me, My God, we know thee, Iſrael:* Oh remember our Father Iſrael: juſt like thoſe in *Matth.* that would cry, *We have Abraham to our Father:* ſo here this people would cry; in their cries in the time of their affliction they would cry to God that they had Iſrael to their Father, we have reference to Iſrael who did ſo prevail as a Prince with God, and therefore we hope we ſhall fare the better for Iſrael;

Or thus, *They ſhall cry to me, My God, we know thee, Iſrael:* That is, we know thee to be the God of Iſrael, we have known how thy waies have been in former times for the good of thine Iſrael, and Lord, remember how thou haſt wrought for thine Iſrael heretofore, and work now for us in the ſame manner: thus there is a great deal in this word, [*Iſrael*] if you ſet it in the laſt place in the verſe, more than if you ſet it in the beginning.

From hence the Notes are theſe:

First, *That in affliction men ſee their need of God.* So the Chaldee paraphraſe upon this place, Alwaies when I bring ſtraights upon them then they pray before me and ſay, Now we ſee plainly that we have no other God beſides thee, Oh! redeem us becauſe we are thy people Iſrael; ſo that's the meaning.

Secondly, *Even Hypocrites and the vileſt Wretches that are, in the time of their diſtreſs, will claim intereſt in God and cry to him;* even thoſe that have departed moſt from him will be ready to claim intereſt in him in their diſtreſs. What an impudency was it for this people that had ſo groſſly departed from God, that had gone ſo againſt their light, and yet they will come boldly and claim their intereſt in God in the time of their affliction? Truly we ſee the ſame ſpirit in men at this very day, the moſt wicked and vile ungodly

Applicar. man or woman that is, yet will be ready in afflictions to claim interest in God; *My God*. I appeal to you in this Congregation, if one should go from one end of the Congregation and speak particularly to every one, and ask but this question, Do you hope that God is your God? Every one would be ready to say, Yes, we hope he is. This is the impudency of mens hearts that will take liberty to go on in a way of rebellion and fighting against God all their lives, and yet in the time of their distress claim interest in God.

Obs. 3.

Thirdly, *That knowledg and acknowledgment of God in an outward formal way is that which Hypocrites think will commend them much to God in time of affliction; that by which they shall have favour from Him because they have made some profession of God: We know thee: as if they should say, Lord, we were not as others that had forsaken thee, we continued Israel still, we did not turn to be Heathens: It is very hard for mens spirits to be taken off from trusting in formality, in outward worship, we are all Christians, we are not turned Heathens; so they shall call to me, My God, we know thee, Israel; we continue Israel still. Oh! how sweet and comfortable is it then to have a true interest in God? in the time of affliction to be able to say, in truth Lord we know thee, and blessed be thy Name Lord we have known thee, we have had experience of thy goodness, and faithfulness, mercy, love, and tender compassion towards us, we have known thee an infinite al sufficient good, thou hast satisfied our souls with thy love, the light of thy countenance it hath been the joy of our hearts, and blessed be the time that ever we knew thee, Oh blessed be the time that ever the Lord made himself known to us; we can say, Lord, we have known thee, and therefore now Lord have mercy upon us; Oh let us all learn to make more of our interest in God, and to labor to know Him more and more, that we may have this comfort in our afflictions, to be able to say in truth, Oh Lord, thou art.*

Comfortable, if in truth.

art our God, and we have known thee. If Hypocrites think it to be ſo great a comfort that they are Iſrael, Oh what is it then to be a true Iſraelite in whoſe heart is no guile?

Fourthly, *Degenerate children they think to have favour for the ſake of their godly parents.* Obs. 4.

We have known thee, Iſrael.] Children ſhould imitate the virtues of their godly parents, and then they may draw comfort from the godlineſs of their parents.

But laſtly, *Hypocrites though degenerate will not only think to fare the better for their godly parents, but they will think to have the ſame mercy as their godly parents had; they little think of the difference that there is between Iſrael heretofore, and that Iſrael that is now ſo baſely degenerated. It follows.* Obs. 5

V E R. 3.

Iſrael hath caſt off the thing that is good: the enemy ſhall purſue him.

THEY cry, We have known thee: but they caſt off the thing that is good; they profeſs to know God in word, but in works they deny him. What is it to ſay, We know God, and to caſt off the thing that is good?

Now the word that is here tranſlated, *caſt off*, ſignifies, *Hath put off a great way, yea, hath abominated the thing that is good: doth not only forſake the thing that is good, but to caſt off with a kind of abomination the thing that is good.* Elongavit, r abominatus eſt

Hath caſt off the thing that is good. That is:

Fiſt, caſt off God Himſelf who is as, *Anſelme ſpeaks of Him, that Good in which there is all Good: God the higheſt and chief good they have caſt him off.*

Secondly, *The thing that is good indefinitely. That is, they will not be ordered by any rule, they care for the good of nobody but only to have their own luſts ſatisfied.* I. Anſelm. Bonum in quo omnia bona.

But that which I think is moſt properly aimed at by this

phrase, *The thing that is good* : is, the Worship of God, *My Worship* : They say, *We know Thee*, but in the mean time they cast off that good thing, Oh that Good Thing, that which I hold indeed to be the thing that is good. Hence observe :

Obs. 1.

The true Worship of God is the GOOD Thing by way of excellency. We account our *Estates are goods*, we use to speak in that kind of language, the goods of such a man. Is our Estates our goods ? Are they such good things ? Oh ! what is the Worship of God then ? The Worship of God that's the thing that is good by way of excellency above all our goods, that's the good thing that a spiritual heart can prize, that's that which God delights in, and wherein his people enjoy, so much communion with Himself ; that's the thing by which God lets out so much good to His People, it's the safety, protection, the blessing of a Kingdom ; the purity of Gods Worship where that is all other good things will follow, that's THE Good thing ; and it is a sign of a gracious spiritual heart to prize the Worship of God in the purity of it as the good thing, above all good things that a Kingdom is capable of.

Obs. 2.

Secondly, Yet Gods own Worship is by carnal hearts of men repelled, and cast off as evil, if it suite not their own ends, and designs : The spirits of men rise against it, they will not so much as examin things in any peaceable and quiet way, but by prejudice ; because they see it not sutable to their own waies their spirits rise, abominating that which God Himself prizes.

Obs. 3.

Thirdly, Though first men do but only leave God, forsake the thing that is good, yet at length they grow to such a ripeness in sin as they cast it off with abomination ; and that's a great deal worse : Meerly to neglect that which is good is an evil, but to cast off that which is good by way of abomination, Oh then the sin of a people is grown to an height, then they are neer to Judgment indeed, when they cast it off ; thus men who heretofore have been very forward in the profes-

tion.

sion of Religion, and seem to love and delight in the thing that is good, but by degrees their hearts were drawn from the waies of God, now they cannot bear the sight of those things to be presented, nor bear the hearing of those things, their hearts rise against any that they see practice them, they now shut their eyes, and stop their ears, and with violence repel the Truth; according to those in *Jer. 44. 16.* *As for the Word of the Lord that thou hast spoken to us, we will not bear thee.* Oh! are there not some that heretofore have thought they have received much sweetness in the waies of God, and now not only left them, but their hearts rise against them, and if any thing be spoken for them, shut their eyes and ears and cast it off and even abominate such? Let such take heed that God cast not them off for ever. *1 Chron. 28. 9.* (it is a speech of *David* to his son *Solomon*) *If thou seek Him, He will be found of thee; but if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off for ever:* How much more if thou dost cast off the thing that is good. Oh! my brethren, let us take heed of casting off the thing that is good; we may pass over many Truths that it may be God hath convinced us off, but let us take heed of casting off any Truth, for then we are ripe to Judgment, then the Lord may justly cast us off for ever.

Lastly, If wicked mens hearts be so vile to cast off God, and his Worship that hath so much good, how much more should we cast off with abomination, that that is abomination it self? How much more should we cast off false worship with abomination and say, Get thee hence? and so all kind of evil and sin that would stick so fast upon us? In *Rom. 12. 9.* *Abhor that which is evil:* to abhor it as well as to abhor Hell it self; it comes from a word that is used for Hell. Thus we should learn from wicked mens casting off what is good, to cast off that which is evil and wicked.

One thing further, *Whatsoever knowledg of God, or profession we make of worshipping Him, yet if we cast off any thing that is good, this deprives us of any interest we have in God, of any comfort in crying to God in our afflictions.* I beseech you take

*Backsliders
from what
they have
found good
in.*

*We should
the more
cast off false
worship.*

*ἀποστρέφον-
τες τὰ το-
πία.*

Obs. 4.

take notice of this; *They cry to me, my God we know thee, but saith God, they have cast off that that's good.* The Note is,

To cast off violently and that against light, any one thing that is good; though it be meant of the Worship of God principally, yet it is spoken indefinitely, to cast off any thing that is good, any truth of God, it is that which doth deprive the soul of having comfort and interest in God, or crying to God in the time of distress: Oh thou sinner how dearly doest thou pay for thy beloved sin? at what a dear rate doest thou buy every beloved lust of thine, when as it doth deprive thee of all comfort and interest in God that otherwise thou mightest have in crying to God in the day of distress?

Applic.

The enemy shall pursue him.

Obler.

When the good of duty is cast off, evil of punishment will come in. By casting off that which is good we cast off mercy, and protection, we open a door to all kind of misery: if we retain that which is good we retain God; but when that which is good is cast off, we lie exposed and naked to all kind of misery, for God owns us not. It follows.

VER. 4.

They have set up Kings, but not by me: they have made Princes, and I knew it not.

HERE we have their Civil apostasie, the other was a Moral apostasie; *They have set up their Kings, but not by me.* Though all Government it is to hold on God, yet we are to know that God had an especial hand in the Government of the people of the Jews; It was as *Lapide* upon the place calls it, a Spiritual, and a kind of Divine Kingdom; it was not merely Civil, the Government that God set over them was typical, it was to typifie the Government of Christ. And hence we are to take this Caution, We may

Lapide

may eaſily be led aſide into many miſtakes and errors if we argue thus, That becauſe the Kings of *Israel* and *Judah* did thus and thus, therefore it is in the power of any King at theſe times to do ſo; for certainly there was a mighty deal of difference between the Government then, even the Government in that State, and the Government now: for State and Church was mixt together, and the Government then it was typical, it was to typiſie the Kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt, therefore though God leaves People, leaves States now to their Liberty to ſet up what Government may be beſt for them, yet it was not permitted to the Jews, they were to have only that Government that God ſhould reveal from Heaven, for their Civil State: therefore when they would change the form of their Government firſt from Judges to Kings, God ſaid, they had rejeſted him in caſting off that.

Caution concerning imitating the Kings of the Jews

They ſet up Kings, but not by me

Expoſ. I.

Some think that this hath reference to the chuſing of Kings at firſt, becauſe that they did it without Gods Warrant when they choſe a King to themſelves at firſt, and ſo they have ſet up Kings but not by me. But I rather think that this hath reference to *Jeroboam* and his ſucceſſors, they ſet up *Jeroboam* and his ſucceſſors, and not by God. This you will ſay, is very ſtrange, for it is cleer in Scripture that it was from God that *Jeroboam* ſhould be King, and that the ten Tribes ſhould be rent from *Solomons* poſterity for the puniſhment of *Solomons* ſin, it was prophesied of by *Abijah* the *Shilonite*, 1 *King* 11. 29, 30, 31. the Prophet came to *Jeroboam*, and rent the Garment of *Jeroboam* in twelve pieces, and ſaid to him, Take thee ten pieces: for thus ſaith the Lord the God of *Israel*; Behold, I will rent the Kingdom out of the hand of *Solomon*, and will give ten Tribes to thee. The Lord ſent his Prophet to tell him expreſſy, that he would rent ten Tribes from the houſe of *Solomon*,

2. The Authors opinion.

to give them to him; and yet here it is said, *That they have set up Kings, but not by me.* Again in the 10. chap. and 15. ver. *Rehoboam hearkened not unto the people: for the Cause was from the Lord, that he might perform his saying which the Lord spake by Ahijah the Shilomite unto Jeroboam the Son of Nebat.* It was from the Lord that *Rehoboam* gave such a churlish answer, was from the Lord that he was left to such a Tyrannical, cruel spirit, that the Lord might fulfil the word that he had spoken by *Ahijah* the Shilonite.

Abulensis thinks that the ten Tribes for the matter of the thing did no more than they might do, and he gives this reason, *for saith he, the people, these Tribes were free Tribes, but *Rehoboam* would bring them into slavery, and he would reign over them as a Tyrant, therefore (saith he) they might lawfully depart from him and leave him, and make to themselves a new King; and then he puts the Cause, viz. for that a people or Common-wealth (saith he) they first gave the power to Kings and Princes, but they did it upon certain conditions at first, therefore as they first gave power unto them so saith he they may diminish it if they abuse it and Tyrannize over them, for (he hath this further expression) the people did not absolutely give themselves to him, when a people do chuse a chief Governor saith he they do not give themselves to them as a man gives to his friend a piece of money, or a horse, so as they give all out of their own possession, and that he might do with them what he will, but upon certain conditions thus and thus: this *Abulensis* hath.

Now though I do not altogether approve of what he hath said, because at least the case between People and

* Ipse tribulibera-
erant, populusq; li-
beri, Rehoboam
autem volebat eas in
servitutem redigere,
easque regere ut Ty-
rannus non ut Rex:
poterunt ergo ab eo
recedere, et novum re-
gem sibi creare; populus
sui vel resp.
principib.

Et regib. dedit impium in se, sed certis justisque condicionibus, inde & potest illud isdem auferre vel imminuere, si ipsi eo abutantur & Tyranni evadant, non enim populus se absolute dedit Regi uti quis Aurum vel equum amico, ut omne suum jus in eum transferat, nec unquam illud revocare possit, sed certis pactis intervenientibus. *Abulensis* in 1 Reg. 12. Quest. 8. T. 9.

Princes now is different from what it was; then God challenged a peculiar Prerogative over them for tendering their Government, yet thus far in Divinity is true; There is more reason that people should now have more power to call off Tyranny than there was, because now none comes * to Government over others but by * Agreement, therefore if the Agreement and Law of the Country be that they shall be elect and not hereditary, they are so: if that the males shall only inherit, he shall only inherit: and so if the Law of the Country were for delivering themselves from tyranny, so far certainly God allows it in His Word.

* viz. orderly and ordinarily.
* Scilicet, formal or tacite.

But now to answer the Case more clearly, *They set up Kings, but not by me*; though GOD had foretold that the ten Tribes should be rent away from the house of David, and that Jeroboam should be set up, yet they did not do this thing in a lawful way as they ought, for they should have consulted with God about the time and manner of it when God would have it done; it was not enough that God did foretell it should be done, but when they did it they ought to have done it in a way of consulting with God, and they ought to have been ordered by God for the way and manner of it, and they did not do it in way of fulfilling the Propheſie, for the people generally knew no such thing but meerly minding their own passions and lusts, they look'd at no further, though God did over-rule it to fulfil his own Counsels, yet they aimed at no such thing. Whence we have these useful Notes for our edification:

A direct
Exposit.

First, *That we may do the thing that God would have done, and yet sin highly against God.* God would have Jeroboam set up, but they only looking at the matter, and did not observe Gods way, God did reject them. Obs. 1.

Secondly, *To do that which God would have done, yet if we do not know that it is Gods mind, we sin against God:* Though we do the thing that God would have done in Obs. 2.

His secret will, yet we sin against God, if we know it not to be His revealed will. Now no action can be good, but that which is done; not only materially good, but formally also, that is which is done in obedience to God; And that shews the dangerous condition of ignorant people, all their actions are sin because they know not Gods mind in them.

Misery of Ignorance.

Obs. 3.

Publius Scipio,

Thirdly, *To go about great businesses without consulting with God, it is sin.* Even the Heathens were conscious of this, therefore *Publius Scipio* would never go out about any great business but would go to the Capitol to pray to the gods.

Obs. 4.

England.

Fourthly, *Alteration in Civil Government is a great business.* God had need be much consulted withal, especially if there be any Church-work mingled with it, there was never a time that *England* had the calling for such consulting with God as it hath at this. Now *England* is about the greatest and weightiest business that ever it had since it was a Nation: The very alteration but of an Officer is a great matter and requires much consulting with God, and especially if it be in the Church: it is very observable of our Savior in *Luke*, 6. 12, and 13. verses, when as Christ was to send out his twelve Apostles as Officers for the Church, the text saith, That he was at prayer all night before, then in the morning he calls his Disciples and so sends forth twelve of them and gives them his Commission. But he makes a preparation all night long in praying to God. Surely those that are about chusing Church Officers, Ministers of God to be their Pastors and Teachers they had need spend daies and nights in prayer. Here they did not consult with God in setting *Jeroboam* over them, and therefore saith God, they have made them Kings, but not by me.

Luke 6.
12, 13.
opened.

Church-Officers with what religious care to be chosen.

Obs. 5.

Lastly, *When we are about great businesses, we must look at Gods ends; we must take heed of our passionate wills, and our own self ends, else we do it not by God.* In Civil Affairs,

fairs, a man that is a Magiſtrate perhaps doth that which is juſt, but he is carried on in his paſſion, but this is not by God; and ſo in Church affairs, the Church Elders, the party doth deſerve it, yet if they be carried on in paſſion and ſelf-ends, this is not done by God: They have ſet up Kings, but not by me.

And then further; As the people ſin'd and God would not own that which they ſet up, ſo Jeroboam ſin'd too. Why Jeroboam might ſay, Lord, didſt not thou ſend thy Prophet to tell me that I ſhould have the ten Tribes, and yet wilt thou not own me? No, God would not own him.

First, Becauſe Jeroboam did not ſeek God,

Jeroboams

And ſecondly, Jeroboam did not ſtay Gods time. As *ſin.* David, he was anointed by God, and though he had many opportunities for to have taken away Sauls life, he would not, and to come to the Kingdom, but he did wait till he ſaw the time was come that he ſhould be brought to the Kingdom. But Jeroboam would not do ſo.

Thirdly, Jeroboam had not right ends in taking the Kingdom.

Fourthly, Jeroboam did not adminiſter the Kingdom for God, and therefore God would not own him, and ſo ſome reade the words; *They have not adminiſtered the Kingdom by me;* but adminiſtring the Kingdom by their own luſts therefore God would not own them. From whence you may have theſe Notes:

First, *That when God promiſes a mercy, if we ſtay not Gods* *Obſ. 1*
time we can have no comfort of the mercy.

Secondly, *When we have a mercy promiſed we muſt be* *Obſ. 2*
brought into it by God, by lawful means; he that beleeves makes not haſt ſaith the Scripture: many they are ſo greedy of places, and preferments, and other things they deſire, that they make ſo much haſt as if they did fear that if they ſtay for the orderly coming into the place they deſire, they fear they ſhould go without it: What bleſſing then can there be in that which we would ſeek to get without

God in making so much haste.

Obs. 3.

And again, *When we have a mercy* (that's the third note) *when we have what we would have, yet if we do not improve it for God, we do thereby renounce our acknowledgment of it from God.* God hath given thee an Estate, or Honors, or Preferment: What doest thou do? Doest thou now abuse this for thine own lusts? Thou doest hereby renounce thy acknowledgement that thou hadst it from God. *They have set up Kings, but not by me, I will not own that; Why? because in the way of their Administration they have indeed renounced any right I have to their Government: And so the Seventy translate the words, They have reigned to themselves.*

ἰαυτοῖς
ἐβασίλευ-
σαν.

Quest.

Yea, but it may be said, How were the people that were living now, guilty of this? this was a long time ago when the people did thus set up *Jeroboam* and rend themselves from the house of *David*, how came they to be guilty of this?

Object.

The Answer is, That they continuing and retaining the Government of *Jeroboam* upon the same ground their progenitors first raised it, are guilty of their sins. Children going on in the way of their parents, contract the guilt of their parents sin upon them.

R. Kimc.
ap Merc.
in loc.

Quando
quidem
ridebant
quod pro-
hiberetur
eos, ab
Ascen-
dendo He-
rosolyman,
in conspe-
ctum Do-
mini, &
fecerat illis
vitulos, et
eorum erat
eum Regno
pelle.

And *Mercer* upon this place quotes an Hebrew, *David Kimchi*: That the people now when they saw what *Jeroboam* and his successors did, that they would keep them from going to *Jerusalem* before the Lord, and when they saw that he made them Idols, and so forsook Gods true Worship, they (saith the Hebrew Doctor) should have driven him from the Kingdom, that was his opinion: but merely for Religion it cannot be, except the Law of the Country will bear them out in it: any farther than the Law of a State, the Civil Law will bear men out in it: and therefore War, it is not meely undertaken for maintaining Religion immediately, but for maintaining those Laws by which Religion is established, the Civil Right

that

that men have to the practice of their Religion: And ſo Wars may be undertaken. If it were in a place indeed where the Law of the Kingdom were utterly againſt Religion, could not there be juſtified, except thoſe that had power likewise for the altering thoſe Laws, ſhould alter them, and then take up Arms.

When Arms may be taken for Religion.

But now, Our taking up Arms is juſtified in this, To maintain the *Civil Right that we have to the practice of our Religion*; ſo that our Caſe is not the Caſe of the Chriſtians among the Heathens: There is a Law of Nature (I confeſs) beyond the Right of any Law, and the Right in that cannot be given away by any Predeceſſors. But becauſe the miſchief would be infinit great if it were left to every man to judge, when by this Law of Nature he might reſiſt, and ſo to reſiſt upon it, this would cauſe infinit miſchief: therefore there is a neceſſity that men ſhould for their particular ſuffer, rather than ſo to reſiſt; it is neceſſary for us to ſtay till we be helped by ſome orderly legal way. I ſay, the God of Order never leaves people to ſuch miſerable Inconveniencies and Miſchiefs, and therefore for particulars they are rather to ſuffer, though they ſhould be tyrannized over againſt the Law of Nature.

Englands caſe in this particular.

Law of Nature.

Particular perſons muſt ſuffer, not reſiſt.

But certainly, for the State or Country, they may judge when the Law of Nature is to be maintained, and Right of a Kingdom that the Law of Nature gives, beſides that which is given by *Positive Laws*; the Right of the Law of Nature is never taken away by *Positive Laws*. It follows.

States not ſo.

Law deſtroies not Nature.

They made Princes, and I knew it not.

They made ſome very deſperately, and God might well ſay, I knew not them: but God ſpeaks of them all, not only of thoſe, but even of Jeroboam himſelf, and Jehu, though they were in ſome regard ſet up by God, yet ſaith God, *I knew it not*; that is, I approve it not, I approved it not in that way they did it, I let them alone in their way

Text paraphraſed.

and

and let them go on; as if God should say, I neither did nor will take Cognizance of what they do to bless them in it: When we seek not God for a mercy, when we enjoy it, God will not so much as own it to be His.

*ה' ירא-
עולו מול.* The Seventy translate the words, *They have not made it known to me.* When we ask not Gods mind and seek not a mercy from God, we do as if we would get it without Gods knowledg; we must tell God what we would have before we presume to take it, and by this means we may go to God with more comfort (if we meet with straights) for help and direction; whereas otherwise, whatsoever straights we meet with, if we should seek to God to help us in such a business, God would say, I knew nothing of it, you undertook it without me, and you must shift in it; but now look to it as you can, sink or swim I will have nothing to do with it. We use to put off men in this manner that have any reference to us, if they will go and undertake a business of their own heads, and if they come to any straights and then they should come for our help, Nay, as you undertook it without me so go on without me. So now I make no question but many thousands of the Servants of God in this great business of the State where they meet with so many difficulties, they can go to God and say, Lord, we did advise with thee, and we undertook this in obedience to thee, and now, Lord, help us in our straights; Oh! it is a comfortable thing for to have the use of our seeking God when we meet with straights in a business.

And I knew it not.] Further there are these two Notes from this.

First, *God knows how to make use of mens sins, they sin'd and yet God brought about His own ends by it.*

Secondly, *Many things are done in a sinful way, and yet God suffers them to prosper a long time: even this Kingdom of Israel that was thus set up without God did prosper outwardly for 200. years together, therefore this is no argument*

ment of Gods owning a buſineſs becauſe it proſpers, it is but as a Cipher, ad a figure to it indeed then it will make ſomewhat, if you can warrant it is Gods Work then you may when it proſpers have comfort. It follows.

Of their ſilver and gold have they made them Idols.

See the ill ſucceſs of it (ſo great an evil is it to do any thing and not call upon God) and all becauſe God was not ſought, whatſoever we do to ſatiſſie our paſſions and luſts for our own ends without ſeeking God, we cannot think but very il fruit wil come of it; though God ſuffered this Kingdom to proſper outwardly, yet woful miſchievous fruit did come upon the alteration of their Government without God; for this Kingdom theſe two hundred years continued in Idolatrous worſhip, and it came upon this. We had need take heed to our hearts that we be upright, and ſeek God in ſetting up any new form of Government, leſt though it be very ſpecious to our eye, we may think that we are delivered from many yokes and burdens, yet ſuch effects may come of it, that we may be brought hereby under many yokes and burdens. They caſt off the houſe of *David* becauſe of the burdens that were upon them, but yet they caſtiug it off from them in a paſſionate way, now they have brought a greater yoke upon them, for now *Jeroboam* and his ſucceſſors, he laies a very heavy yoke upon their very conſciences, the yoke of Idolatry; it was a burden that before was upon their backs and ſhoulders, but now it comes to be a burden upon their conſciences, and thats a great deal heavier than upon their backs and ſhoulders.

They have made them Idols of their ſilver and gold.] God doth inſtance in this as indeed the ground of all for the ſetting up of falſe worſhip, & is the foundation and ground of all kind of miſchief in a Common-wealth, they were content to contribute their ſilver and gold for their Idols, they

The danger of ſetting upon any new form of Civil Government.

Prophane
covetous
men worse
than Ido-
laters.

Pulchrior
est cite Sol
quam pe-
cunia tua,
Et tamen
iste Sol nō
est Deus
tuus. Aug.
de Disci-
plinā
Christi-
anā.

* Chrysost.
in Matth.
28. Hom.
84.

they had rather be without that than without their I-
dols: drossie vile spirits had rather be without God and
Christ and his Ordinances, than without their silver and
gold, let them have their silver and gold, and let God and
Christ and His Ordinances go; yet these Idolaters say,
Let us have our Idols and let our silver and gold go. Yea,
they parted with their gold and silver to make them gods;
but many of you keep your gold and silver and make them
Gods too, *The Sun* (saith *Austin*) *is a more beautiful thing*
than thy money, but it is not thy god: That which brings in
silver and gold to drossie carnal spirits, that they love;
but if it brings not this in they care not for it whatsoever it
be. * *Chrysostom* hath another expression: *A Covetous man*
(saith he) *is not delighted with the beauty of Heaven, nor with*
the motion of the Sun: why? because the Sun doth not send forth
golden beams into his house.

That they may be cut off.

עצבים

The word translated *Idols*, signifies those things that
bring them much labor. And then follows: *That they may*
be cut off, as if he should say, they are at a great deal of
charge to undoe themselves, many men make their own
damnation to be chargable to them; saith God, *They*
made Idols of silver and gold, that they might be cut off. My
end was, that they might be cut off, whatsoever their end
was. When we are busied to attain plots, God he may be
working even by those very things we bless our selves in,
and expect great advantage by, God may in the mean
time be working our ruin in them; Oh consider of this,
while I am plotting for my self in this and the other thing,
and I am blessing my self in hope of advantage, but Gods
Thought, and Counsels, and Workings, and Ends may be
now cross to mine, even intending my ruin, my eternal ru-
ine, where am I then? *Whatsoever we do which evil doth ne-
cessarily follow it, is accounted by God, as we brought the evil on*
purpose

Finis cuius
Et finis cui

purpose upon our selves. Surely they set not up silver and gold on intention to destroy themselves, but because destruction doth necessarily follow, therefore God accounts it done on purpose: in *Jer.* 7. 18. in *Pro.* 8. 36. *All them that hate me, love death: Surely no man loves death: but when you do cast off the instruction of wisdom, you do as much as if you should say, You love death: as here, that they might be cut off.* It follows.

V E R. 5.

Thy Calf, O Samaria, hath cast thee off.

THY Calf, O Samaria. He calls the Idol a calf by way of contempt. But why is it called the Calf of Samaria? It was not set up in Samaria: There is two Calves only that we reade of, and yet here it is call'd the Calf of Samaria. The reason is this; that Samaria was the chief City, and because the Calf was by the power and riches, and countenance of the chief City of the Land maintained, therefore it is call'd the Calf of Samaria; Where that's corrupted, the whol Land wil quickly be corrupted, & where that stands right it goes well wth the whol Land: that's the reason why the Adversaries seek to corrupt and overthrow our chief Citie. As all did depend upon what Samaria did, therefore the corruption of false worship is attributed to Samaria, it is thy Calf Oh Samaria. And therefore if God had not moved the hearts of the People of this City, but we had brought Popery in, it might have been said, it was the Popery of London: and whereas on the other side, if God please to work their spirits right to go on to the end, the children not yet born may have cause to bless this Citie, and say, This is the Reformation that we may bless London for.

Calf of Samaria why so called.

London.

It hath cast thee off.

Hath cast thee off from me, *ſe* Some have it. But rather as you have it in your books, *Thy Calſ bath caſt thee off.* Whence note.

Obſer.

That though Idolaters promiſe to themſelves ſafety and protection by their Idols, yet they will leave them at laſt. All you that go on in the waies of ſin, know that thoſe waies of ſin of yours will leave you in the lurch at the laſt: as they ſay, the Devil leaves the Witches when they come to the priſon: when Judas went to the Scribes and Pharifees in the anguiſh of his ſpirit and caſt down the money and ſaid, *I have ſinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood.* What's that to us (ſay they) ſee thou to that? Therefore the beſt way is to caſt off our ſin and wickedneſs firſt. But God will not do thus, God will not caſt off his People in the time of trouble, and when our unbeleeving hearts do think that God will caſt us off in the time of trouble we make God an Idol, as if God would do as the Idols did, caſt us off. We may in Gods Cauſe be brought into ſtraights but God will never caſt us off in them, when we are ready to think our ſelves to be utterly forſaken in ſtraights, then God may be working the greateſt good for us; we have a moſt notable Scripture for that in *Iſa. 49. 13, and 14. verſes, Sing Oh Heavens, and be joyful Oh Earth, and break forth into ſinging Oh Mountains; for God hath comforted His People, and will have mercy upon His afflicted.* But mark, *Zyon ſaid, the Lord hath forſaken me.* They were in a ſinging condition, and God calls the Heavens to ſing, and the Earth to be joyful, and the Mountains to break forth into ſinging, becauſe of ſo great a work that God was making for His People: but *Zyon ſaid, The Lord hath forſaken me.* And ſo it is with particular ſouls, they are ready to ſay, the Lord hath forſaken me, but God will not do ſo.

Mine anger is kindled againſt them.

When wicked men are brought into the greateſt ſtraits then Gods wrath is hotteſt, and then alſo Conſcience belks and burns moſt hot; as mens countenances change red and pale ſometimes with anger, ſo it is ſaid here, that even the countenance of God grow red and pale with His anger againſt this people. Though ſuperſtitious men may think that outward pompous worſhipping pleaſes God moſt, yet we ſee here that it doth ſtir up the anger of God, ſo that God grows even pale againſt them with anger.

Excanduit [as in hot Iron there is whiteness mixt with the redness]

How long will it be ere they attain to innocency.

Mens hearts are ſtubborn in their own waies, they will not be taken off, wicked men will be true to their own principles, there is a ſtubborn conſtancy in evil, as well as a gracious conſtancy in good, *How long will it be?*

Again ſecondly, God is very patient a long time. Then,

Thirdly: Continuance in ſin is no excuſe but an aggravation of ſin to make it grievous to God; when God chaſtiſes us we are ready to cry, *How long Lord? Will he retain his anger for ever?* Know that our continuance in ſin, is as great a burden to Gods Spirit, he cries out when will they be made clean, when ſhall it once be? and in Jer. 4. 14. ver. Oh Jeruſalem waſh thine heart from wickedneſs that thou maieſt be ſaved; how long ſhall thy vain thoughts lodg within thee.

Ere they attain to innocency.

The words are, *He cannot attain;* that is, he is ſo deeply engaged that he cannot attain to innocency: when men are engaged in evil waies they cannot get out.

לֹא יוֹצֵא
כִּי
בְּקִי

Non poterunt inno-
centiam.

Obs. 1.

Take heed of engagements in that which is evil.

Obs. 2.

Secondly, *If by custom and engagement in evil we have no power to get out, this will be no excuse to us.* In 2. Pet. 2. 14. *They have eyes full of adultery, and they cannot cease to sin:* This is the aggravation of sin, no excuse. A learned man of late hath an excellent Note upon this, *They cannot bear innocency: and indeed according to the Hebrew this may as well be added for explication, for in the Hebrew there is nothing else but this, They cannot innocency; the word attain, is not in the Hebrew, and it may very well sute with the time wherein Hosea did prophesie; and the meaning is this: They cannot bear with those who will not joyn with them but will go to Jerusalem to worship, and this provokes the Spirit of God against them, because they cannot bear those that would seek to free themselves from defilements in the Worship of God: there is nothing in the world wherein men cannot less bear one with another than in dissentions about the worship of God, and commonly the Nocent party is the most bitter against the Innocent; as the Lutherans they were worse in their waies than the Calvinists, specially in the point of superstition, but they were a great deal more bitter against the Calvinists than the Calvinists were against them; it was an expression that Calvin hath, Though Luther (saith he) should call me Devil, yet I would honor him, as a Servant of Jesus Christ.*

Non pote-
runt ferre
innocen-
tiam.

pp

The word here that is translated *Innocency*, signifies cleanness: false worship whatsoever holines may seem to be in it yet they are not clean, but Gods Worship is clean, the fear of the Lord is clean: it is such wickednes as if God should say, *You are never like to wash off the guilt of it as long as you live, it is not so easie to get off the guilt of superstitious worship as men are aware of, we cannot but acknowledg to our own shame that we have sullied our selves wth superstition formerly, we had need wash and rinse our hearts again and again, and be willing to lie abroad a frosting whol nights, that we might be clesed from the filth that we heretofore:*

heretofore have defiled our ſelves withal, yea we ſhould not think much, nor mervail though the fire of Gods wrath comes out againſt us and burn hot and long, if it may be but to purge us and not deſtroy us, it is well; for it is not eaſie to be clenſed from ſuperſtition; it is only the blood of the immaculate Lamb that is able to clenſe it, (this filth) it ſticks very faſt. And ſo much for the fifth verſe.

V E R. 6.

For from Iſrael was it alſo: the workman made it, therefore it is not God: but the Calf of Samaria ſhall be broken in pieces.

THE Prophet proceeds in his conviction of Iſraels ſin, with the threats of God againſt it.

For from Iſrael was it.

Expoſ.

That is,

Their Idolatry was from themſelves: It was hard to get them off from their Idolatrous worſhip, for it was from themſelves. Other people worſhiped Idolatrous Images, as being deceived, either made to beleve that they came from their gods; as that wiſe Town-Cleark of Ephesus, in his grave, ſage ſpeech, *Acts*, 19.35. ſaith, their Image came down from Jupiter, or elie they were ſuch as were brought from the Temples of other People, whoſe Original they knew not. But ſaith God, My People are more ſottiſh than any, for from Iſrael themſelves doth come theſe their Images that they do worſhip, they have ſet them up themſelves, they know that the other day they were but pieces of wood, overlaid with Gold and Silver; for their Calves they were ſuch kind of Idols as Iſrael invented themſelves, they were not the ſame as ſome think with the Egyptian Apis, that Idol, for that was bigger, it was rather a Bullock, and it was a live one, and with ſeveral ſpots and divers things wherein it differed from the Calves that Iſrael worſhiped,

Acts 19.
35.

Apis what kind of Idol. the Calves of Iſrael not the ſame.

worshiped, so that the Calves of Israels worship, it was their own invention. Hence there is these Notes :

Obs. 1. First, *That none are so sottish in wicked waies as Apostates.* Israel was more sottish than any people.

Obs. 2. And Secondly, *To be devisers and inventors of evil, and especially of any thing in the Worship of God, of false worship, it is a great aggravation of ones sin;* Those that are the first inventers and devisers of wickedness, and especially of any false worship, they are most wicked and abominable before God. *It was from themselves.*

Obs. 3. Thirdly, *What comes from our selves we will stick much to in the Worship of God.* For this is given as a reason why they could not be brought off from that false worship; *It was from themselves:* And hereby men shew that they honor their own Fancies and own Wills above the Will of God, and the Mind of God: We will a great deal more easily part with the Worship of God, that comes from God, than with Worship that comes from our selves.

Expos. *For from Israel was it also.*

There is somewhat in that likewise: that is, As formerly in the wilderness they set up a Calf; so here again from Israel also: Former examples of Gods wrath against their progenitors will not deter them, they follow still the guise of their Ancestors in false worship.

Obs. 4. *No sin is more hereditarie than Idolatry:* Hence the second Commandement only threatens to visit the sins of the Fathers upon the Children, because Idolatry is so hereditary, *From Israel also.*

The workman made it; therefore it is not God.

There are Two Arguments why their Calf was not God.

First, From the workman that made it.

Secondly,

Secondly, Becauſe it ſhould be taken in pieces. It's the greateſt folly to look upon that which hath its excellency from our ſelves to be ſuperior above us, and that in the higheſt degree. To forſake that God that made us, and to make that to be a God unto us that we have made our ſelves: The Father looks upon his Child as inferior to him, becauſe he was the inſtrument of his being, and ſo he may well: If any man have maintainance by one, or is raiſed by him, he expect that he ſhould be ſerviceable to him. Only Idolatry makes men go againſt the very principles of reaſon: They made it and yet they accounted it their god,

*Idolatry
drives men
againſt
principles
of reaſon.*

And an eſpecial Note from hence is, *That man by any work of his own cannot put a Divinity upon a creature.* They made it, therefore it is not God. Man by any work that he can do cannot put Divinity upon a creature, no, he cannot ſo much as put holineſs into a creature; all the workmanſhip of man by his conſecration or any thing that he can do, cannot make ſtones and mortar to be holy, ſo as now it ſhould be a ſin to uſe them to any* common uſe, man takes too much upon him to think to raiſe the creature ſo near to a Divinity, he cannot by any work of his put any Religious reſpect on any creature ſo as that God ſhall be neerer to him, or he neerer to God than in any other place. Whatſoever is of mans work in Gods Worſhip it periſhes in the uſe of it, ſurely then mans creation cannot be God, *The work man made it, therefore it is not God.*

** in caſe of
need.*

Indeed there is a creation of man that the Scripture ſpeaks of that is called, *God*, but not truly, not God really, rather a Metaphorical God; that creature that the Scripture ſpeaks of in 1 Pet. 2. 13. he calls their Kings and Governors mans creation, man made them; and you know the Scripture calls Governors, Gods. *I have ſaid, you are Gods.** I but it is ſaid, *they die like men*: this text will ſhew it: if man made them they cannot be Gods. And the former Scripture tells us, that Kings and Governors are mans creation.

*1 Pet. 2.
13. Kings
and Magi-
ſtrates
mans crea-
tion in
ſome ſort.
* Pf. 82.6*

anims Av-
Spawnd.

creation. In your books it's translated *mans Ordinance* but it is in the Greek, *mans Creation*: man made them and therefore they are not Gods; therefore we must not give them the honor of a God, to subject our consciences unto them, no, neither are we bound to subject our outward estates and liberties, and lives to their humors and lusts, meerly to their own wills, for this is proper to God to subject all to his will, meerly because it is his will; but seeing man made them they are not truly God, and therefore they must not have the honor that is due to God.

If all the Art, and Skill, Power and Riches, if all the men in the world were put together, and all the wisdom and power of Angels joyned to it, to extract all excellency in all things in all creatures, and to make that which should have all created excellency in it, yet this surely could not be a God to us; I say, if we conceive all art, skill power, and riches, of all the world brought together into one man, yea, all the skill and power of Angels put into him too, and if he were able to make an extract of all the excellencies of all creatures, and put into one thing, yet this could not be a God unto us; because it was made. And shall we say further, God himself by his infinite power cannot make any thing to be a God to us: I say, God himself by his infinite power cannot make any thing to be a God to us; if he himself were made he could not be God to us; nay, if God himself were made he could not be God: therefore surely that which the workman hath made cannot be a God.

How vile then are our hearts? and how do we debase our selves, to subject our selves to every vanity, as if it were a God, when as that all the power in God himself cannot raise a created excellency to that height as to be a God to us? how vain is the heart of men that makes pleasure their god? as the voluptuous, his belly; that makes money his god, as the covetous; that makes honor and the applause of men, as the ambitious, to be a god unto us.

Bernice

Bernice and Agrippa came with great Pomp, they came with much Phauſie as the word ſignifies, the excellency that al their pomp had, it was but that that phantie put upon them.

In this God ſhewes the excellency of an Immortal Soul, that it is in that excellency that only an Infinite Eternal being that is of Himſelf can be a God to us.

Again, This is an argument againſt the Idol of the *Maſs*; a vile Prielt, a filthy Whorematter makes it a God: What a Deity is that that is from his maker? Is there any greater ſtumbling-block to *Jews, Turks, or Heathens*, to keep them from Chriſtian Religion than this, That Chriſtians ſhould make their God, and eat him when they have done? That's the firſt Argument: *It is no God, becauſe the workman made it.*

Secondly: *But the Calf of Samaria ſhall be broken in pieces.*

No God ſurely. He ſpeaks here with indignation (it is not God, it is a Calf) as he doth in that of the Pſalmiſt, he made a Calf that eat graſs, *It ſhall be broken in pieces*, it ſhal not be able to help it ſelf, much leſs help them; it ſhal be as Dagon before the Ark, broken all to pieces.

Hierom upon the place ſaith, that he learned from an Hebrew (this word, *broken in pieces*, the word is not a Verb, but a Noun, *ſhall be breakings in pieces*) he learned from an Hebrew, that this word ſignified a *thin web*, like Spiders webs in the air, As you ſee in ſome times of the year in the Fields, thin Webs, and upon the graſs, thin webs like Spiders webs that preſently diſſolves into Atoms; ſo that their Calf ſhal be like unto thoſe thin Webs, like unto Spiders Webs that diſſolves it ſelf and comes to nothing. All the confidence and hopes in any thing we ſet up in the place of God, it's ſuch unto us; What difference is there between ſuch a thing and a ſtrong Rock, and an high To-

Abſ. 25.
23.
μετὰ πολ-
λὴς φαντα-
σίας.

The excel-
lency of
the ſoul.

Uſe 2.
the abomi-
nableneſs
of the Maſs

Pſal, 106.
20. Rom.
1. 23.

Signific. of
the word

A God.

wer, such as God is to his people.

And again, The word signifies *Saw-dust* that comes from Timber that is sawn, and so it shal be *broken in pieces*: Look as the Calf in the wilderness was broken even to dust, to poulder, and *Moses* made the people drink of it; so God will serve this Calf.

Obs. 1.

And then further observe: Idols are to be broken in pieces; so God commanded, *Exod.* 34. 13. *Dent.* 7. 5. *Ezek.* 20. 7. with many other Scriptures; and thus godly Magistrates have ever done, broke Idols in pieces. And blessed be God for that that hath been done of late among us that so many Idols, and that *great Idol* that was in the eminent place of the City, that God put a spirit into those that were in Authority to break it in pieces: it must be done by the Magistrate.

I remember *Austin* in his sixt Sermon upon Christs Sermon, speaking of that place in *Dent.* 1. 5. first, saith he, *You must possess the Land*, and then, *you must overthrow their Altars*. And then notes, That those which have the possession of the Land, as now those Publick places, men only in Authority have the possession of them, and therefore it is for them to break the Idols in pieces. In the City of *Basil* we reade, that every *Ash-wednesday* (as they call it) is observed a Feastival instead of the Popish Fast on that day, because of the burning of Popish Images, and they account it a great mercy. And though we have no such warrant to observe such a day as an Holy day, yet certainly as a day of an outward civil rejoycing, we have cause to observe those times wherein notorious and abominable Idols have been broken in pieces.

A custom
in Basil.

Obs. 2.

Again, *Whatsoever it is that is subject to be broken in pieces, certainly we are not to make it to be our God*. Now all creatures in the world are subject to breaking, your estates are in danger to be broken in pieces, therefore they are not Gods; that's the argument of the holy Ghost here: yea it may be many of your estates are broken in pieces already,

ready, Oh what poor Gods were thoſe that you made to your ſelves before, and ſo any creature whatſoever? therefore Oh let's truſt in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlaſting ſtrength. *Iſa. 26. 4.*

The laſt note from hence is this, *That the putting too much upon a creature, the bringing a creature too near to God, and Deifying of it makes way for the deſtruction of that creature.* The Calf of Samaria ſhall be broken in pieces becauſe it was made an Idol: If you will make uſe of your eſtates as a ſervant to you, to fit you for Gods ſervice you might keep it, but if you would ſet it up in Gods place, it is juſt with God it ſhould be broken in pieces: Whatſoever you ſet your hearts upon and make a God-unto you, it's juſt with God it ſhould be broken in pieces; if you ſet your huſband, your wife, your child, your friend, in the place of God, it's the only way to undo them, to undo them in reſpect of you at beſt. Many great Inſtruments of God, God hath been ſain to break them to pieces, becauſe that men have ſet them up in the place of God, and made even Gods of them. It follows.

Obſ. 3.

England.

VER. 7.

For they have ſown the wind, and they ſhall reap the whirlwind.

Sowing is a laborious work; and this Idolatrous people were very laborious, took a great deal of pains about their falſe worſhip. Thoſe that ſow they muſt be abroad in the cold and wind; *Idolaters were willing to take pains and go through many difficulties for the furtherance of their falſe worſhip.* Let not us be ſluggiſh then in the true Worſhip of our God, let us be willing to paſs through many difficulties to further the ſervice of our God.

I.

Obſ. 1.
Idolaters
are laborious.

Uſe:

Secondly, *Sowing is a labor without any preſent profit coming in by it, the benefit of the labor it lies in expectation for the future.*

2.

Obs. 2.
Idolaters
sow in hope

Idolaters are content to sow though they gain nothing by their labor, yet in expectation of somewhat hereafter. We are presently weary of a little labor except we find somewhat coming in presently, we cannot wait for the blessing of the former and latter rain upon our endeavours, we must be alwaies reaping or else we are wearied and discouraged; Idolaters would work hard though they get nothing for the present, how much more should we labor for God in expectation of the harvest that God hath provided?

3
Obs. 3.
Idolaters
lay ground
for succes-
sion.

Use

Thirdly, *Sowing it is a work for the maintaining of the succession of provision for one Generation to another.* "Idolaters they labor to keep up their false worship for the posterity that is coming after"; they are not content to enjoy it themselves all the while they live, but they take a course to have those they leave behind them to enjoy it when they are gone. Thus we should do, and great reason we have to do thus, in the true Worship of God, not think it enough to enjoy it our selves, but to take all waies that possibly we can that we may leave our posterity to enjoy it, that we may sow for posterity as well as for our selves, that we may leave a stock of provision for our children afterwards. Through Gods mercy our forefathers did so, and we have reapt the harvest of their seed, and through their endeavors we have enjoyed much of this Worship of God, and the Truths of God, let us likewise sow for those that are coming after.

4.
Obs. 4.
Idolaters
observe
their sea-
son.

simile

Fourthly, *Sowing is a work that must be done in its season or it is in vain.* Idolaters they will observe their seasons, their fit times for the furtherance of their false worship; much more should we do for the Worship of God. We have had a fair season, and we have seemed to be very busie, the Lord grant we do not sow the wind, as it follows in the next words, *They have sown to the wind*: This is a proverbial speech that signifies, the taking a great deal of pains to little purpose: As a man that should go abroad in the fields, and spread his hands about and take pains, and

and yet hath nothing but air in his hands. The Wind is *Wind.* an empty creature in reſpect of things that are ſollid, therefore the Scripture doth often make uſe of this creature to ſignifie the vanity of the labors, the hopes, and endeavors of wicked men; you ſhall find theſe ſeveral expreſſions in Scripture tending to this purpoſe: as the *Laboring for the wind*, Eccleſ. 5. 16. Secondly, *to feed upon the wind*, Hoſ. 12. 1. Thirdly, *to bring forth the wind*, Iſa. 26. 18. And fourthly, *to inherit the wind*, Prov. 11. 29. And fifthly, here in the text, *sowing to the wind.*

Many people do nothing all their lives time but ſow the wind, they labor and toil, but what comes of it? it is no good account that we can give to God of our time, to ſay, that we have taken a great deal of pains; we may take pains and yet ſow the wind.

Obſ. Ma-
ny ſows
the wind.

Who are thoſe that ſow the wind?

Queſt.

First, *Men that ſpend their thoughts and ſtrength about things no way profitable to themſelves or others*; thoſe ſow the wind; thoſe that do with a great deal of earneſtneſs, do juſt nothing, or what they do is but a triſſe; many Scholars ſtudy night and day, they tire themſelves with reading, and muſing, and writing, and yet they are no way uſeful; either their ſtudies have been in uſeleſs things, raking among ruſhiſh and lumber, or elſe they know not how to make uſe of their reading and learning; and indeed it is a pittiful object to behold, to behold one that hath been all his daies a great Student, and hath beat his brains, and roſe early, and gone to bed late, grutch'd the very time of his meat, and yet he is a uſeleſs man in the place where he is, he hath no uſe at all of all his ſtudies, he is of no ſervice to Church or Common-wealth: Here's a man that hath all his daies ſown to the wind.

1.
Who ſow
to the
wind.
Some ſtu-
dents.

Secondly, *All thoſe who take pains and are at great coſt in ſuperſtitious worſhip*, all their intentions that they have to honor God they come to nothing, it's but a ſowing to the wind; and this is that which is here eſpecially meant,

2.
Idolaters

They

Scope of
the Text.
Papists.

They sow the wind. All Idolatrous worshippers that take much pains and are at great cost they do but sow the wind: How many Papists have we that dares not for their lives but rise at their hours that they have vowed, to rise at midnight to their beads, or very early, spend many hours every day at their beads, wear out their bodies by their fasting, by their watching, deny themselves the use of the creatures, wear sackcloth, lie very hard, tire their bodies by pilgrimage, forsake their revenues, that that their progenitors had left them, vow perpetual virginity, shut themselves up in Cloisters, what a deal of labor and toil is here to the flesh, and all this with conscienciousness, all this with a desire to honor God, and to afflict themselves for their sins? And yet this not having warrant from God being a will-worship, all this is but *sowing the wind*, they lose all their labor, cost, and charge, and all their thoughts, and devotions they are all lost.

3.
Formalists

Thirdly, Such as are *formal* in the true Worship of God, as content themselves in the outward part of Gods Worship, having no power nor life of godliness in their service they perform: You have many that do things out of custom, content themselves in the deed done, dare not for their lives neglect Prayer, not one morning nor evening, nor at other times, and are often with Gods People in fasting, or coming to hear the Word; but yet all this while being but *formal*, they not having the life and power of godliness in these duties, they do but *sow the wind*, they lose all their labor, and when they shall come upon their sick-beds, and death-beds, and desire comfort from what they have done, they shall find nothing but the wind to feed upon, all will be turned into wind, and they will have no solid comfort for their souls to feed upon in the day of their distress.

4.
The vain-
glorious.

Fourthly, Those men *sow the wind*, who do all that they do out of *vain glory*, in hypocrisie, to set up themselves among others, spend a long time in prayer, hath admirable

ble gifts in prayer, sweat and spend their strength in prayer, but yet a principle of *vain glory* acting of them all this while; they have been sowing the wind all this time. Men that are publick parted and do abundance of good in the Church of God, and in the Common-wealth, but yet having a principle of *self* and *vain glory* that acts them, they lose all, they sow the wind all this while.

A fift sort that sows the wind, are such, as leaves the rule of the Word, and carry on their actions altogether by the rules of Carnal Policy, thinking to do great things by the fetches, and reaches they have that way. Your Carnal Politicians that have the Word and Worship of God as things under their feet, but that which their deep reaches are after, are some higher things; they sow the wind. And thus the people here at this time, it was carnal policy that carried them in that way they were in, and God calls it all, but sowing the wind; they thought they had framed to themselves a notable piece of work, but saith God, *It is but sowing the wind.*

Sixtly, Such as seek to shift for themselves by *sinful waies* when they are in any straits, such as go out of any lawful courses to help themselves out of trouble, these are they that sow the wind to themselves, there will nothing come of all the labor they take.

Now first, here the Church of God may have much comfort in this thing, That all Idolaters, that all false-worshippers, that all carnal politicians that are working against them, in all they do, they do but *sow the wind*, they can never prevail, be not afraid of them. The seed-time of our life is a seed-time for Eternity: It's an evil & dangerous thing therefore now to sow the wind, to lose this seed-time, and to have nothing for our souls to seed upon to all eternity, Oh! how sad will it be when we are entering in upon Eternity, then to see that we have all our life-time sown the wind? Did men consider of their actions, that their actions were seeds for Eternity, certainly they would take more

Prayer.

5.

Carnal politicians.

6.

That serve themselves of sin.

Use 1.
Comforts for the Church.

Life, the seed-time for eternity.

simile.

more heed what they do. Men are very careful of their seed; What Husband-man that is to sow his ground, would go into a Market to buy Chaff, to buy blasted stuff to be his seed; no, he would buy the greatest and plumpest Corn of all to be his Seed. So should we be careful of all our actions, for they are such seed as must bring forth an harvest of eternal happiness, or else eternal sorrow; and especially we had need look to our Seed when God gives us a fair opportunity of sowing. All Hypocrites and Formalists, and False-worshippers, they sow the wind, their actions are but as the wind: but the Servants of God whose works come from Faith, and are indeed godly, they sow to immortality and glory, their Seed will bring forth a glorious harvest. I remember *Luther*, though he were a man that seemed to beat down works very much, yet he hath this passage concerning works: *Take works out of the cause of Justification, and no man can too magnificently commend good works that come from faith.* And speaking of a good work that comes from faith, *It is more precious (saith he) any one good work, it is a more precious thing than Heaven and Earth: yea, he himself that is no Merit-monger yet he lifts up good works that come from faith, and saith, the whol world is not sufficient reward for one good work that comes from faith: Indeed the works of the Saints have a great deal of excellency in them, one gracious work hath more of the glory of God in it than all the creation of Heaven and Earth besides; I say, the whol frame of Heaven and Earth hath not so much of the Glory of God in it as one good work that comes from the Grace of God in the hearts of the Saints; and my reason is this, because a good work that comes from the Grace of God in the hearts of the Saints, it is a reflection of spiritual life that is the very life of God, the Scripture calls it, The Life of God, and the Divine Nature; Now, an action of spiritual life doth more set out the Glory of God than any Glory that God hath passively; as the Glory that he hath in the frame*

good works

how excellent

Why?

of

of the Heavens and Earth it is but a paſſive glory, but here the very glory of God is reflected upon his own face, it is a glory of ſpiritual life: A man doth not account one ſo much honored in an Image that is drawn of him, as when he ſeeth his child to act as he himſelf doth act, when his child ſhall preſent himſelf in doing that which he himſelf doth do. Now all the frame of Heaven and Earth it is not ſo much as a picture, it is but as the foot-ſteps of God, and the back-parts of God; but in one gracious action of the Saints there God ſees his child act as himſelf doth, he ſees the workings of his own holineſs and his own virtues; we ſhew forth the virtues of him that hath call'd us out of darkneſs into his mervailous light. Miniſters of all men they had need take heed they ſow not the wind, God hath made them Seeds-men of that eternal Seed of his Word, if they then either becauſe they are loth to take pains, or to be at the charge for good Seed, they ſow huſks and chaff, and bring meerly empty words unto their people; or if they do take pains enough, but bring their own fancies and counſels inſtead of the precious immortal Seed of the Word, they do but ſow the wind. The Seventy tranſlate this that we have here: *Sow the wind*: Thus; *They ſow thoſe things that are corrupted by the wind*; thoſe actions that pride corrupts, will never bring forth good fruit. It follows.

ſimile.

1 Pet. 2.9

Miniſters
muſt be-
ware of ſo-
wing the
wind.

How 1.

2.

αἰνεῖ μὲθ' οὐ-
ραν.

Corrupta
vento. 70.

And they ſhall reap the whirlwind.

As we ſow, ſo ſhall we reap. The word in the Hebrew (*Tremelius* upon this place notes) hath a ſyllable added more than ordinary; and that ſaith he is to encrease the ſignification of it: To note, that this is not only a whirlwind, but a moſt terrible whirlwind. And mark: he doth not ſay they ſow the wind, and they ſhall reap the wind; no, there is more in the Harveſt than in the Seed; if men will ſow the wind, they muſt expect to reap the whirl-

Turbo

כֹּחַ הַרוּחַ
here it is

כֹּחַ הַרוּחַ

wind. If thou hast but a little pleasure in thy sinful waies, thou must expect a great deal of miseries in the fruit of thy waies. Their labor shall not only be in vain, but much evil shall come, sudden and violent destruction shall come of their labors. All sinful actions are like unto the sowing of the wind in the earth: Now we know if windy vapors be got into the earth, they cause Earth-quakes, they break forth into whirlwinds, into violence: and so wicked actions they break forth into violence and irresistible evils, and wil cause heart-quakes at last. Great is the power of the whirlwind, the Scripture sets it out as very great in 1 Kings, 19. 11. A strong wind that rent the mountains and tore in pieces the rocks, overturned the mountains by the roots. Job, 28. 9. this it is that breaks the Ceders. Sabelicos reports that upon a time, Cambyse's Soldiers being at dinner in a sandy place, there rises up a whirlwind and drives the sand upon them so that it covered them and choaks them al: And yet, what's the wind, but many vapours being put together? and yet, Oh the mighty strength that there is in them! By the way this meditation may be raised here: What, shal the addition of many such weak things as vapors are come, to such a mighty strength? Oh then, what's the strength of the infinite God unto which nothing can be added? Ad many vapors together and it causes strong winds that rends up the Mountains by the roots; if many weak things put together (I say) come to that strength, what's the strength of an infinite God unto which no strength can be added?

Whirl-
winds.

Gods Al-
mighty po-
wer.

Obs. 1.

But observe out of the words, *Just with God it is, that those that sow the wind* (in all the former regards, those six particulars that were named) *that they should reap the whirlwind*; should be brought into trouble and vexation, miserable and unremedable distresses: you that spend your time about trifles when as God sets you in the world upon work of great consequence, it is just with God that you should

should have horror upon your spirits hereafter, when God shall make you to see how you have spent that time upon which eternity depended, upon sowing the wind all your daies: And you that spend your time in false worship and so think to put off God in your false worship, it's just with God that you should reap the whirlwind. And so you that spend your strength and time in formality of worship and never sanctifying the Name of God, it were just with God that horror and distress and trouble should fill your souls. And so you that aim at your own ends and vain glory, when as you should set up the Name of God in your waies, it's just with God that miserable horror should possess you: How many have lain upon their sick-beds and death beds and cried out, Oh I have done all in hypocrisy! and so horror of conscience hath been as a whirlwind unto their souls. And so carnal politicians that have left God and sought to provide for themselves and others, that by sinful courses have sought to deliver themselves out of straits, the Lord many times brings them into most dreadful straits and the worm of conscience gnawing upon them, and they have found by experience that they have reaped the whirlwind. And indeed we have begun of late to corrupt the Worship of God, and were carried on by wicked devilish carnal policy, How did we sow the wind? and the Lord hath now made us in great measure to reap the whirlwind. *Job* saith the whirlwind comes from the South; but indeed the truth is, we have had whirlwinds coming from the North and West, and may yet have whirlwinds coming from all parts of the Kingdom, For what hath the Land done of late but sown the whirlwind? Let us not wonder though God doth at this day speak unto us out of the whirlwind, as once he did to *Job*.

Yea, but many they say, *That that we have sown it hath some substance in it, it is not only the wind, for we see that it comes to a blade, it comes forth.*

1. *Triflers*2. *Superstitious,*3. *Formalists.*4. *Hypocrites.*5. *Carnal Politicians**England.*

Gradation
of the text

Yea, but saith God here, *It shall not bring forth a stalk*; I beseech you observe the words that follow, *It shall not bring forth a stalk*: But it may be a stalk may come forth: I but saith God, It shall be crushed before it comes to the bud. But what if it doth bud, it shall be blasted, it shall not come to the meal. I but what if it come to the meal? Then strangers shall devour it saith God; so it follows, *They sow the seed, and reap the whirlwind*; it shall not grow to a stalk, or to the bud, or there shall be no meal, or strangers shall devour it. A most elegant expression it is to shew Gods watching over an apostatizing people for evil, and to shew that in whatsoever they may seem to prosper for a while, yet at the last the Curse of God will be their ruin.

Obs. 2.

Obs. First, *Though sometimes Gods Curse is upon wicked actions, so that nothing comes of them*; yet at other times they may be suffered to seem to prosper, to have some degree of growth, God may let them come to a stalk, or to the bud, or to the meal; this notes the possibility. It may come to the stalk, possibly to the bud, possibly to the meal, but then all shall come to nothing.

England.

My brethren we have found it so by experience, as it was here in this people, for it was spoken of their wicked Idolatry, and their carnal policy. And hath it not been so with our Adversaries? some of their actions God hath crush'd them presently, and then they have grown up to a blade, and they have seemed to have meal in them, but then the Curse of God hath come upon them: Oh! the uncertainty & the vanity of the comforts of ungodly men! When can they bless themselves in any one project? When it comes up to the blade? No saith God, it shall not come to a stalk: God watches there that it seldom comes so far. Well, but then, will they bless themselves if it hath gotten up to a stalk? No, not then neither, God curses them. But if it bud, now may they not bless themselves? Oh! our projects begin to bud, and they thrive bravely, may they

not

not bleſs themſelves now? No, God watches them there, and curſes them in the very bud. I but what if it comes to meal, that it's ready now to come to a full iſſue, and ready even to come to be eaten, now that they come to feed upon their projects, and they think all is ſure? No, the curſe of God is upon them there, ſtrangers ſhall devour it. Bleſſed be that God who hath followed our Adverſaries this way, How often have they bleſt themſelves, and when they have had one deſign, this will do it, Oh how finely it works! and perhaps they get the very advantage that they themſelves deſire, and think all is well, and then God's Curſe comes upon them. We are my brethren too unbelieving, we are ready to fear if we hear but of any thriving of any plot and project of our Adverſaries, if any ſtalk doth appear, and eſpecially if they begin to bud, Oh! then we think they ripen; & we do not look up to the great God who doth take delight in blaſting the projects of the Adverſaries; as the Bleſſing of God is upon the good actions of his people, ſo the Curſe of God is upon the wicked projects of his enemies. God may ſeem many times to leave many a good action, but God doth carry it through at length, though it ſeems to have many things that would cruſh it in the very bud, yet God carries good projects through many difficulties, and God cruſhes wicked projects through much proſperity.

Laſtly, *To have the ſatisfying of our deſires to go on a while, Obſ. 3.*
and to have them cut off before we enjoy them, is a great judgment;
 but juſt with God it ſhould be ſo: for ordinarily we are thus in our obedience, that uſually withers before it comes to any ripeneſs; if it get up to the ſtalk it may be it comes not to a bud; if to meal, ſome ſtrange luſt or other comes in and devours it; Oh how many times doth our ſtrange luſts devour our good actions that comes forth a good way? How many in their young yeers, we had thought *Young pro-*
 very gracious ſeed began to ſprout forth, and we had *feſſors.*
 thought that the ſeed grew to a ſtalk, and when they came

to be for themselves, we had thought they had begun to bud in gracious actions, we had thought it came to be meal, to their middle age; but to their old age strange lusts hath come and devoured all. It's a great judgment for strangers to devour our estates when we have scraped a deal together; truly, for strange lusts to come to devour thy hopeful beginnings, it's a greater judgment than for strangers to devour thy estate, that thou hast gotten by a great deal of labor: Many men have labored all their lives, and taken pains, and that which they have done hath seemed to come to something; and the truth is, in the conclusion the Devil hath had the advantage of all.

England.

And God seems to be out against us in some degree, even in the waies of his judgments at this day; thus as many of the Adversaries projects, so many of ours the Lord hath blasted before they come to a stalk, and when they have been budded the Lord hath blasted them, by unfaithfulness of some or others; when we have had our greatest thoughts, the Lord hath seem'd to blast us, and what God will do with us we know not, only let us make sure that our seed be good, and though this doth not prosper or the other doth not, yet at last God will bring the greater Harvest upon us.

VER. 8.

Israel is swallowed up: now they shall be among the Gentils as a vessel wherein there is no pleasure.

ISRAEL, they had made so many Leagues among other People, til they were even swallowed up by them. And truly my Brethren, if there be not a great care had, there is much danger in making Leagues with other Nations, lest upon the need they see we have of them they should inroach upon us, and at length even have Laws given to us by them: It was so with the people of Israel, that by their League with other people they were so inroacht upon by them,

Forraign
Leagues.

them, as at length they gave them Laws and ſwallowed them up. And thus many of the People of God, yea, of the Churches of God, by mingling themſelves with the world are even ſwallowed up, ſo as they loſe their beauty; and there's no difference appears between them and the men of the world. It's one thing for wicked men to creep into the Church unawares, (and certainly there's none can expect that any Church in the world can continue but wicked men and hypocrites will mingle themſelves) but it's one thing when they creep in unawares, and another thing when the fence is broken down, ſo as it is very hard to ſee any face of a Church among them: thus it was with Iſrael.

Churches mixtures with the world dangerous.

But now ſhall they be among the Gentils, as a veſſel wherein is no pleaſure.

By theſe words, *Veſſel of no pleaſure*, is meant, a veſſel that is for the carrying up and down of excrements; only the Scripture when it mentions ſuch vile things, ſpeaks in a model way; but that's the meaning of the word: as if he ſhould ſay, Even my people ſhal be in a vile contemptible condition among the Gentiles, as a veſſel that is fit for nothing but excrements. *Jehoiakim* is threatned in Jer. 22. 18. though a great man, yet he is threatned to be as a veſſel wherein is no pleaſure, they had waſted their ſubſtance in ſeeking help from the Egyptians and Aſſyrians, and theſe made a prey of them; ſo long as they had any thing of value continued, then they made much of them, but their eſtates being once waſted, and they ſwallowed up in their very eſtates, they look now upon them as vile and contemptible in their eyes. And this is the way of wicked men, while wicked men are ſerving their own turns upon any, they will hug them and make much of them, but if that be done, then they ſcorn them & contemn them; non are more ſcorn'd and contemn'd than Profeſſors of Religion.

Wicked men firſt ſerve their turns of the Godly, and then ſcorn them.

on who have basely crouched to wicked men, and sought to shelter themselves under them, when their estates are once consum'd and gone, they are more scorned by those that served themselves of them than any; and therefore let us learn wisdom, and how far we venture to make use of men, and do not please our selves in this, that they hug and commend us, if it be but to serve their own turns, when they have gotten what they would have, they will then scorn you, and look upon you as base people, and kick you out.

εὐχρηστὸν
καὶ ἄχρηστὸν
70. Vas
inutile.

Again, *A vessel wherein is no pleasure.* The Seventy translate it, *an unprofitable vessel.* But there is more intended certainly in this expression; a vessel employed in base and contemptible uses; Israel shall be so employed; and thereby he shall know a difference between my service, and the service of their enemies: Oh it is a sad expression, what *Israel!* a vessel employed and received to empty out excrements! [1. Israel were a people precious and honorable in the eyes of God, *Isa.* 43. 4. [2. An holy people unto the Lord, *Deut.* 14. 2. [3. They were Gods peculiar People above all Nations in the world in the same place. [4. Gods Portion, *Deut.* 32. 9. [5. Gods Inheritance, *Isa.* 19. 25. [6. Gods peculiar Treasure, *Exod.* 19. 5. [7. Gods Glory, *Isa.* 46. 13. [8. Gods Delight, *Isa.* 62. 4. [9. Israel were the dearly Beloved of Gods Soul, *Jer.* 12. 7. and yet now Israel is become a vessel only to take in and empty out excrements; Oh what a change doth sin make! they were holy vessels, employed in holy services, in attending upon God and His Worship, so as no people were; but now, oh! what a change hath sin made in them? How doth sin vilifie men, to be employed in base services, it is the most against an ingenuous spirit that any thing can be. I remember I have read of a young man of *Sparta* that being taken by *Antigonus* and sold for a slave, all the while that he that brought him did employ him in any thing that did stand with ingenuity he did it, but when he bid him go and

Israels pre-
rogatives.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
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- 6.
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- 9.

and empty a veſſel wherein is no pleaſure, no ſaith he, I will not ſerve you now in ſuch a thing, and his Maſter being angry with him he gets up to the top of the houſe and falls down and breaks his neck rather than he would empty ſuch a veſſel. And certainly there is nothing that is ſo beneath the excellency of an Immortal ſoul as ſin is, for hereby though thou beſt high in thine own thoughts thou comelt to be a veſſel for the very Devil to empty his excrements into : and that's lower than to be a Scavenger to go up and down to take the filth of the ſtreet : in being employed in the ſervice of the Devil thou doelt more debate thy ſelf than if thou wert a Scavenger to carry dung and filth in a Dung-Cart ; but as if thou wert judged to ſuch a kind of life and employment, that thou ſhouldeſt go from morning to night to carry away the filth in thy very hands and mouth. Some men are veſſels of mercy, they are choſen veſſels, veſſels of honor fitted for the Maſters uſe : and it is an infinite mercy of God to us when as we have deſerved to be caſt out as veſſels wherein there is no pleaſure, that God ſhould imploy any of us to be veſſels of His Sanctuary, that God ſhould take us out of the common lump, ſuch veſſels ; whereas others are veſſels of wrath imployed only in baſe ſervices that are beneath the excellency of an immortal Soul.

A ſinner is the veſſel where into the Devil empties his excrements.

Gods free-grace to the veſſels of mercy.

Yea, Some there are who have been eminent in the Church heretofore, who have been veſſels fill'd with the Gifts of the holy Ghoſt (I do not ſay Graces) now they are veſſels in which there is no pleaſure ; many of the Saints heretofore have been reſreſhed by them, from thoſe Gifts of the holy Ghoſt that have been in them, but now their Gifts are gone, they are fit for no pleaſure, but for Pot or Pipe : Now idle drones that are fit for nothing but to ſet in the Kitchin, and (it may be) to ſcum the pot, yea ſome of them fill'd with poyſon, veſſels wherein neither God nor man can take pleaſure, yea and ſome very forward profeſſors of Religion that once were as the poliſhed

Lapsed Miniſters.

And Profeſſors.

*Demost-
benes.*

Saphires and are now become more black than the coal, turn'd Apostates; they were as golden vessels in the House of God, and now are become vessels wherein is no pleasure. It was a speech that once *Demosthenes* had to the *Athenians*, he desired them that they would not make an Urinal of a Wine pot; for to imploy those men in base services that had been eminent, even those men that God Himself hath heretofore made use of for great services in Church and Common-wealth, the Lord hath left them to be vessels of no pleasure. Oh! remember al you from whence you are fallen, thy heart is now exercised upon such low things, thy work (it may be) now is only to further the wicked designs and desperate malice of other men; And dost thou think to be a vessel of glory, to stand before the presence of the holy God, and joyn with Saints and Angels in the eternal praises of His Name? Oh! remember from whence thou art fallen, and be not at quiet till the Lord hath been pleased to purge thee and make thee fit for thy Masters use, and to become a vessel of honor in thy Masters house.

VER. 9.

For they are gone up to Assyria, a wild Ass alone by himself; Ephraim hath hired Lovers.

THE Lord by the Prophet proceeds on in his charge against the ten Tribes here.

They are gone up to Assyria for help.

*The vile-
ness of dis-
fidence in
God.*

They are gone up] they look not up to the high God for their help, but they are gone up to *Assyria*, *Assyria* is higher in their eyes than the God of Heaven is. How vile a thing is it to forsake confidence in God out of suspicious thoughts of him; for so it was here, they retained suspicious thoughts of God, as if He would leave them in their extremity, and out of those suspicious thoughts of him, they

they forſake him and ſeek help elſe where; they expect more good, more faithfulneſs, more love, not only from the creature than from God, but from the very Enemies of God than from God Himſelf; yea, and that people that profeſſed Intereſt in God, that would ſeem to bleſs themſelves in this, *That God was their God*, even this People, look'd to have more good and to find more faithfulneſs in the very enemies of God than in God Himſelf; let the Heavens be aſtoniſhed at this wickedneſs: and yet this evil is in the hearts of the children of men.

A wild Aſſ, alone by himſelf.

This creature the Scripture mentions in divers places for one of the moſt unruly, and untamable, and fierce creature in the world. Such a creature as cannot be brought to be ſerviceable, it wil not be brought to live with men, no, it cannot be brought to live long with other beaſts, no nor to keep company with their own kind, ſo fierce and ſavage it is, but runs up and down in the wilderneſs alone. In Job, 11. 12. we have mention of this creature. *For vain man would be wiſe, though man be born like a wild Aſſes Colt.* And in Job, 39. 5. *Who hath ſent out the wild Aſſ free? or who hath looſed the bands of the wild Aſſ?* And in Jer. 2. 24. to name no more. *A wild Aſſ uſed to the wilderneſs that ſnuffeth up the wind at her pleaſure; in her occaſion who can turn her away? all they that ſeek her will not weary themſelves, in her month they ſhall find her.* In her occaſion when he hath a mind unto the ſœmale, ſhe ſnuffeth up the wind, as the Hiſtorians ſay of her, they go up to Mountains and there they ſeek to have the ſent of the ſœmale, or the male, ſo they ſnuff up the wind even for the ſent of her. And ſo the Naturaliſts that write the nature of this Creature, *Pliny* in his eighth Book and forty Chapter: Thoſe that are Scholers that deſire to know more of the nature of this beaſt may find divers things there. But now we are on-

Jer. 2. 24.
illustrated

Pliny.

ly to speak of it as the Scripture speaks of it here.

Quest.

Why doth God compare Ephraim and the ten Tribes to the wild As?

Ans.

Why the ten Tribes compared to a wild Asses colt, Wicked men wild upon their lusts.

In their month, what?

For two Reasons. 1. To shew the extream stubbornness and fierceness of this people. Wicked men that have forsaken God, and are left to themselves, do not only become like unto savage creatures, but the very worst of all savage creatures, they run up and down satisfying the lusts of their own hearts irresistibly and bear down all before them, they stamp, and rage, and are mad when at any time they are opposed in their wicked way, this is the scope of the holy Ghost here: thus Ephraim was when he was opposed. Do you not find many so, that are in a violent way set upon wickedness and ungodliness that they will hear nothing, they snuff at the wind and all that is said against them, and run violently upon wicked waies, and upon their own ruin: It may be *in their month you shall find them*; that hath reference unto the very last month which the wild Ass goes when it is with young, then when it is so big, and till then there is no dealing with them. Some Historians say that the wild Asses are so fierce, that they will tare asunder Armor of proof, but only in the very month when they are so big that they cannot weld themselves, then you shall find them. So, though sinners be never so stubborn, yet God hath his month, and perhaps then you shall find them. When at any time you find your children, or servants, or others to be stubborn and stout against whatsoever is said to them, and even rage in their madness for the satisfying of their wicked wills, you may remember this text and creature: they are as wild Asses that are alone by themselves; and among all wicked men Idolaters are the most stubborn and stout in their wicked waies, their hearts are set upon their Idols, yea as the phrase of Scripture is in *Jer. 5. 38, They are mad upon their Idols*. There's nothing that can be said to those whose hearts are taken with false worship, nothing will prevail

prevail with them without an infinite power of God put forth, and there's no sinners more bold, more untamable and fierce in their waies, then those that are superstitious, and that's their reason that if they be opposed in their way of false worship, you know there will be such tumultuousness of people flinging of stones against windows where God is truly worshipped, any thing in the world though they know not what they do, yet because they think themselves condemn'd in their sinful waies, therefore they run like wild beasts in a furious manner even against those that worship God better than themselves.

Secondly, God compares the ten Tribes to the *wild Ass* in way of contempt of them. As in the former place of *Job*, 11. 12. *Vain man would be wise; though man be born like a wild Asses Colt*: he would fain think himself somebody, yet he is a most base and vile creature. And if any of you be not so fierce in your wicked waies as some others are, if God hath tamed your spirits by His Word and Spirit, bless God for it, for all men are born like a wild Asses Colt, they are mad upon their wicked waies to ruin themselves. But because there's no men that think higher of themselves than stubborn spirits; for stoutness and stubbornness doth evermore proceed from pride, because they think it such a dishonor for their wills to be crost in any thing, therefore the Scripture casts the more contempt upon them, and calls such, proud, stout fools, wild Asses; and indeed there are none more contemptible in the eyes of God than stout sinners. It follows.

2. *Wicked men contemptible.*

Stubbornness the fruit of pride.

A wild Ass, alone, by himself.

Alone.] The reason of this expression is, to shew, that Ephraim and the ten Tribes they would be at their own hands, they would have their own wills, *alone*: There's these two things exprest in it.

First, That they would be under no government, but *alone*.

Alone.

1. Under
no govern-
ment.

Ed quod
ambula-
runt in
voluntate
animæ
luæ.

Servants
at their
own hand,

Especially
Maidens.

alone by themselves, and have liberty to frisk up and down, and do what they list alone, acknowledging no Commander; and so the Chaldee Paraphrase hath it, *Because that they would walk in the evil of their own lusts, and would acknowledg no Comander.* And thus many at this day, they love to be alone, that is, to live at their own hand, to be from under Government. Though it is here, he was alone in the Wilderness, he would rather be in the Wilderness alone, so be it he may acknowledg no Commander, than in the best pastors under any command. Thus it is with many, they love to be alone, that is, they are loth to come under any Government, they had rather be in the wilderness and suffer never so great straights than come under any Government; It is true of divers sorts of people, even the lowest sort, many that love to live at their own hand, servants that are not able to provide for themselves that if they have but a little sickness are ready to starve, yet that they might live without any command, not under any Government, they will chuse rather to endure abundance of hardship that they may live alone; many times it is so, especially in the female sex, which ought to be under Government and some Protection, yet they love to be alone at their own hand; I say, and meerly because they cannot endure to come under any kind of Government whatsoever.

Christians
without
ordinances

And in the wilderness.] Their lives indeed are as in the wilderness, when they are in any straights and distresses they have no body to look after them and regard them because they loved their liberties so much before. So, many had rather be without all Ordinances in the Church, or many Ordinances, only that they might live as they list, at their own wills, that they may not be under the Government of Christ, they had rather live in the wilderness of the world so that they might have liberty, rather than be in Gods Vinyard under the Government of Christ. These come under the reproof here that Ephraim did in this place.

Secondly

Secondly, *Alone by himſelf*, as unfit for Society, they were ſo furious and fierce in their way: Some are of ſuch untoward and perverſe diſpoſitions that they can agree with no body, ſo that they are only fit to live in the wilderneſs: I ſuppoſe you have met with in your families that are ſo extreemly perverſe in their waies, and they are of ſuch untoward and crooked diſpoſitions that they are fit to live in no Society but alone in the Wilderneſs: and this reproof of Ephraim comes likewiſe upon thoſe.

Ephraim hath hired Lovers.

חֲבִיבִים

The *Aſſyrians* and *Egyptians*, and others; the words ſignifie *Loves*. Before they put their confidence in the *Aſſyrians*, and now they make them their loves. The thing I note is this.

That where we place our confidence, there our love ſhould be placed. Obſ. 1. If God be the confidence of our hearts, let our love be placed there, yea let God be our Loves, in the plural number, for ſo it is here, they hired Lovers; ſhe would fain have the *Aſſyrians* to love her. When God is forſaken, when we have loſt our Intereſt in Gods love, no mervail though there be ſuch a ſeeking after the Creatures love; men that forſake God they ſeek to make up what they have not in God in the Creature: as a dog when he hath loſt his Maſter he is ready to follow every one he meets with. Again,

ſimile.

He hath hired Loves.] Be cauſe they had nothing lovely in themſelves therefore they hire the love of others to them; they ſeek even to hyre love, though the truth is, Love cannot be hyred nor purchaſed, although men may fawn and glaver, and flatter, and crouch that they may gain the love of ſome other, yet if there be no lovelineſs in themſelves to gain love, although thoſe whom they fawn on, and flatter may uſe them for their own turn, and ſerve themſelves upon them, yet the truth is they will deſpiſe them

Thoſe that have nothing lovely in themſelves, will uſe unworthy means to purchaſe it.

Love cannot be bought.

them in their hearts, and so often they will discover to their intimate friends how they scorn and contemn them; therefore if others would have love, there must be some excellency and loveliness in us; for love cannot be hyred. But,

Ephraim hath hyred Lovers.] This shews the shamelesness of the ten Tribes in seeking after their false worship. Other Harlots they are hyred to commit uncleanness; but Ephraim will be at charge for their Idols: Many Harlots count it a great dishonor for to seek after Loves, to seek after Whoremasters, though they can imbrace them when they come unto them, but yet they will rather have a hyre than they will hyre them; but mark, those that are superstitious they think not upon their honor, but they will hyre, to the commission of spiritual whordom they will go to hyre Lovers and be at a great deal of charges, in Ezek. 16. 33, 34. *They give gifts to all Whores; but thou givest thy gifts to all thy Lovers.* And the contrary is in thee from other women in thy whordoms, whereas none followeth thee to commit whordoms, and in that thou givest a reward, and no reward is given unto thee; therefore thou art contrary. As if God should say, you are more vile and base in your uncleannesses than any in the world besides; for other Whores they receive rewards, but you are so set upon your filthy lusts that you will give rewards that you might commit uncleanness.

Oh. 3.

From hence the Note is, *That Idolaters will not stand upon terms if they may have their Idols, any way:* they care not how they debase themselves, they will not stand upon honor and respect, but let them have their false worship they will submit to any thing. Oh! why should we stand upon our terms thus in the matters of the honor of our God, when publick good lies at the stake? why should not we be willing to suffer shame and disgrace, any thing rather than the publick good should not go on, than the service of God should be hindered? If others will not seek to us,

yet

An exhortation to the godly

yet if good may be done, let us ſeek to them, if God may have Glory: Though others be never ſo vile in their carriage towards us, yet let us do what we can to win and convince them, let us be willing to lie under their feet that God may be glorified: If others will not joyn in a good work except they may have the honor of it, let them have it ſo be it the work may go on, let us reaſon ſo, Why ſhould I put forth my ſelf and others go away with all the glory? let the work go on, and if they will ſtand for the glory let them have it: ſo God may be liſted up let us be willing not to be ſeen: This is that which doth hinder thee the promoting of his Cauſes. But men ſtand upon terms and they will not go on in a good cauſe but break off if others be prefer'd before them. If there be two carrying a piece of timber through a narrow paſſage, and if theſe two men that are carrying a long piece of timber and they muſt carry it through a narrow paſſage, if they ſhould ſtand ſtriving who ſhould go foremoſt, one ſaies I will go firſt, the other ſaith, nay but I will go firſt, they can never carry the timber, If one have one end and the other the other end and they cannot agree which ſhould go firſt, and he that goes after thinks himſelf diſhonored becauſe his fellow goes before him, they can never carry it through but they muſt lay it down. So it is many times with a good cauſe, it is like a piece of timber upon two mens ſhoulders, and it muſt go through a narrow paſſage, and one ſaith, why ſhould not I have the glory of it? and the other ſaith, why ſhould not I have the glory of it? and the while men ſtand wrangling who ſhould have the greateſt glory, in the mean time the publick cauſe is exceedingly hindered; let us be willing to ſubmit and debase our ſelves any way ſo be it the true Worſhip of God may go on.

*An apt
ſimile.*

Further, *He hath byred Lovers.*] It's an evil thing to be drawn to falſe worſhip, or bodily uncleannels upon any terms, out of hope of the greateſt gain, and to deliver our

L

ſelves

Paulina.
Josephus
lib. 18.
cap. 4.

selves from the greatest affliction : but now, for a man or woman to seek after the waies of sin, to be at cost that they might have their lusts, this is more vile; for a Whore to prostrate her self for money, this is base and abominable though she should have never so much money, but to give money, this is more base and abominable. *Josephus* reports of one *Decius Mundus* which was a Noble man, that to one *Paulina*, a Lady in *Rome*, he offered as much as came to six thousand pounds for to satisfie his lusts but one night, and yet was refused. So certainly uncleanness should be cast off with indignation though it be tempted unto with never so much gain; but for one to be set upon uncleanness so as to seek after it, and to spend their Husbands estates that they might have the free way for the satisfying of their lusts, this is a most abominable thing indeed, and yet thus, many are guilty both in regard of bodily and spiritual adultery. It follows.

VER. 10.

Yea, though they have hyred among the Nations; now will I gather them, and they shall sorrow a little for the burden of the King of Princes.

THES E words in the reading of them seem to be dark, and yet we have much of the mind of God in them, and much concerning our selves.

Yea, though they have hyred among the Nations.

Explicatio.

This God still takes ill that they should go to the Nations for help, when God had made their condition so much above the Nations, for in their going to them they did as it were say, that all the love and mercy, and protection from the great God it was no more towards them than the Nations had, they did (as it were) hold forth to the world that the Nations were rather in a better condition

tion than themſelves, in that they would go to the Nations for their help; and this went very neer to the heart of God, for God had laid out the very ſtrength of his love, and the riches of his mercy upon this people, and after he had done ſo much for them yet that they (becauſe they were in ſome little afflictions for the preſent, that they) ſhould go to the Nations that did for the preſent proſper ſomewhat outwardly better than themſelves, Oh! this was exceeding grievous to the heart of God: and thence the Note is this.

That it is a very great evil, when wicked men ſeem to proſper a little in their outward condition more than Gods People; for thoſe that are the people of God to begin to think that therefore thoſe wicked ones are in a better condition than themſelves, this is an evil that doth go very much to the heart of God; and very ordinarily it is in ſome degree or other among the People of God, I appeal to your conſciences in this very thing, though at ſome time your ſouls have had ſweet refreshing from the Lord in the enjoyment of communion with him, but yet when Gods hand hath been out againſt you, when you look'd upon others though you knew them to be wicked and ungodly yet they have proſpered, their Ships came home ſafely and richly, and their trading goes on; Do you not ſometimes find ſuch riſing of your thoughts within you as if ſo be that theſe men were in a better condition than your ſelves? Oh! if you have but the leaſt thought riſing that way, know it is that which doth exceedingly grieve the Spirit of God by which you are ſeal'd, that becauſe they have a few loaves more than you, though you have all the riches of God and Chriſt, though you have the inheritance of Saints, yet that you ſhould think them in a better condition than you are in: As a child, if he ſees ſome ſtranger have a bit of meat better than he hath, he ſhould think preſently that his father loves the ſtranger better than him; this the father takes ill. How ordinary is it upon this

Obſ. 4.

Admonition to Saints,

ſimile.

L 2

ground

ground for those that have profest themselves to be godly rather to withdraw themselves from the afflicted Saints, and seek correspondence with wicked men that prosper. God would have his people see an alssufficiency in himself in their saddest condition, so as they need not go out from him for help, but still wait upon him and keep his way; the Lord by his Prophet rebukes *Jehoshaphat* in 2 *Chron.* 19. 2. for loving the ungodly and helping them that hate the Lord. And is there not as great an evil to seek the love of the wicked and ungodly and help from them that hate the the Lord? certainly the evil is very great, it argues very little love that we have to God, it charges God of unfaithfulness, as if though he hath engaged himself to his people, yet he would leave them in the lurch; this encourages the wicked in their wicked waies, and it charges God with that which is accounted one of the most vile things among men. What is accounted one of the vilest things among men, that a man should set another men about his work, and then leave them in the lurch when they meet with troubles in their work? It is as vile a thing as any is among men, and we should look upon such men as should imploy others in any service and then leave them to shift for themselves in their straights, we should look upon them as vile men, unworthy to be dealt withal. Now what would we but charge God with this, even that which makes men to be most vile?

And this besides is a most *desperate folly* so to do, for when thou art thinking to provide for thy self by correspondence with ungodly men, it may be thou wert just at the very point of deliverance at that very time; it is Gods usual way to come to help his people when they are in the greatest straights; and therefore it is the greatest folly that when we are in straights then to think of shifting courses, so that then we must forsake our own mercy in thinking of shifting courses; in straights above all times Christians should take heed of thinking of shifting courses, because
then

then above all times thoſe are the times for God to ſhew his mercy, and juſt then : Wilt thou then be forſaking him ? Oh ! it is that which ſhould lie neer to your hearts, if any of you have been guilty of this, let but the Word of God bring this upon your ſpirits this day, Oh ! how do I know but at that very time when I took ſuch a ſhifting courſe, that was the very time that God was about to do my ſoul good and of doing good for my body, and yet then I deprived my ſelf of good, that goodneſs and mercy of God ? It follows yet,

Now will I gather them.

This gathering among Interpreters hath reference either to the Nations whom they ſought unto, or to themſelves. *Explicat.*
I will gather them ; that is, That Nation ; or, I will gather you. If to the Nation, then the ſcope is thus :

Notwithſtanding you hire the Nations, yet I will gather them againſt you, they ſhall be ſtrengthened againſt you with the ſame money that you hyre them withal, I will turn it againſt you, and now you have provided fair for your ſelves, have you not ? 1.

Many times when we think to provide beſt for our own peace, we make the greateſt proviſion for our own ruin : God many times makes people work their own wo and ruin themſelves, and there is no means that doth more fully and directly tend to undo them than what they do themſelves ; and thus God over rules the counſels and thoughts of men. Obſ. 1.

What a vain thing is it to plot againſt God, when God can turn mens Arrows againſt themſelves ? No men are greater instruments of Gods wrath (many times) againſt us than we are our ſelves, yea, and than thoſe are that we ſeek moſt to correſpond withal ; and it is juſt with God it ſhould be ſo, that if we wil leave him, to ſeek correſpondence with wicked men, it is juſt with God that of all men in the world thoſe ſhould be the men that ſhould be

be made the Executioners of Gods wrath upon us.

Explic. 2. But now, if it be to Israel, I will gather them among the Nations. Then the word here gathered is sometimes used for gathering dead corps in an Army when they are slain in Battel. You go and think to have the Nations, but you shall be as a company of dead corps in an Army, and lie in heaps there. But I find Calvin hath a further Note upon it, and takes it as having reference to the former verse. *This people are wild, and run up and down, this way and that way to shift for themselves, but I will gather them; that is, I will keep them in; so the words likewise may signifie, I will keep them in, I will gather-in their spirits, there shall be some work of prudence or other to keep them in, I will keep them from those waies wherein they would presently have ruined themselves.*

Calvin in
loc. Colligā
eos, retine-
bo eos.

Obs. 2. People run many times headily on in evil waies that would certainly ruin them; but when Gods time for the execution of his wrath is not yet come, the Lord restrains them and keeps them in from such waies; though their hearts be set upon such waies of undoing themselves, yet they shall not go on in them, I will pity them who cannot pity themselves. But then it follows (in which the greatest difficulty of the verse is.)

And they shall sorrow a little for the burden of the King of Princes.

Explic. in This hath more darknes in it, and yet upon the searching into it, we shall see it cleer, and many excellent Truths cleered from it. There are these Five Things to be enquired after for the opening of these words.

5. parti-
ulars.

1. First, *Who is this King of Princes that is here meant.*

2. Secondly, *What was this burden of the King of Princes.*

3. Thirdly, *Why doth he call this the burden? Or rather thirdly*

thirdly thus, *When was this threat fulfilled, that they ſhould ſorrow for the burden of the King of Princes.*

Fourthly, *Why doth he call it the burden of the King of Princes ?*

Fifthly, *What's meant by ſorrowing a little.*

These five things will clear the text. Indeed we cannot ſee the full meaning of the holy Ghoſt without underſtanding ſomewhat of theſe five.

First, *Who is meant by the King of Princes.* We are here to underſtand the King of *Aſſyria*, becauſe he was a great King whoſe Nobles were Princes, and we find this both by Scripture and likewiſe by humane Story; in 2 King. 18. 24. *How then wilt thou turn away the face of one Captain of the leaſt of my Maſters Servants.* And in Iſa. 36. 13. *Hear the word of the great King, the King of Aſſyria.* And how wilt thou turn away the face of the Captains of the leaſt of my Maſters Servants. His Captains and Nobles were as Princes. And ſo *Joſephus* in his 1. Book, 10. Chapter, as I remember ſaith, That at the time before *Sodom's* deſtruction, the *Aſſyrians* were Lords of All *Aſia*, ſo that the *Aſſyrian* was a great King, and here called the *King of Princes.*

King of
Princes,
i.e.
The King
of Aſſyria.

Joſeph.
lib. 1. cap.
10. Antiq.
à Princip.

Thus God ſuffers his enemies to grow great in the world, an *Aſſyrian*, a dog, a wicked wretch under the curſe of God, and yet is he the great King, even the *King of Princes*; as *Luther* hath ſuch an expreſſion concerning the *Empire of Turkie*, it is (ſaith he) but one crum that the great Maſter of the family doth caſt to dogs. What are your eſtates then? Certainly though you be never ſo great in the world, what's any of your eſtates to the whol *Turkiſh Empire*? and if that be but a crum that the great Maſter of the family caſts to a dog, you ſhould never then bleſs your ſelves in the enjoyment of a little of the world. But though the *Aſſyrian* may be called the *King of Princes* in regard of his power over ſome great men, yet moſt properly our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt* he is the *King of Kings*, and Lord of Lords: in *Revel. 19. 16.* and he hath on his Veſture, and

Obſ. 3.

Luther

Jeſus Chriſt
the true
King of
Princes.

on

Revel. 16. on his Thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS,
19. opened AND LORD OF LORDS.

Why was it written upon his Vesture, and why upon
1. Openly. his Thigh? *Upon his Vesture*, That is, he will appear openly to be the King of Kings; there was a time when Christ seem'd to be (as it were) a servant under the domination of Antichrist, but now his name shall be upon his

2. Church militant.

Vesture, openly; and then upon his *Thigh*; that is, upon his lower parts, his *Church Militant*, it shall have the Kingly power among them for its good, so as they shall be above the Nations, according to the Prophecie in Isa. 60. 13. *He will make the place of his feet glorious.* (the

Isa. 16. 13 illustrated.

Church in their low condition) He doth not say, he will have the name upon his Crown, but upon his Thigh, that is, upon his lower parts, upon his people, that were in a low condition, he will make the very place of his feet to be glorious, even there shall be written, *The King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.*

2. But Secondly, *What was this burden?* This burden was those Taxes that were upon the people, whereby they maintained their correspondence with this King of Assyria: correspondence with wicked men it is burdensom: for the the more they are sought to, and yeelded to, ordinarily the more burdensom they are: and whatsoever they do for you for a while, it is indeed to serve their own ends, and this they brought upon themselves: for they would go to Assyria, and they found the Assyrians to be burdensom to them.

Use.
Follow not
thine own
waies.

When men will follow their own waies, and think to have more ease in their own way than in Gods, it is just they should find those waies to be burdensom to them. I am perswaded there is not one in this Congregation but hath found the experience of this; when you think your waies will bring more ease to you than Gods waies, have not you found your waies burdensom?

But thirdly, *When was this fulfilled?* If we would know the

the meaning of the Prophet we muſt refer to the Hiſtory of the Kings, and in 2 Kings, 15. 19. there you may find when this Propheſie was fulfil'd. Phul the King of Aſſyria came againſt the Land, and Menahem gave Phul a thouſand talents of ſilver that his hand might be with him to confirm the Kingdom in his hand. And Menahem exacted the money of Iſrael, even of all the mighty men of wealth, of each man fifty ſhekels of ſilver to give to the King of Aſſyria. There was one burden. And then in the 29. ver. In the daies of Pekah King of Iſrael, came Tiglath-Pileſer King of Aſſyria, and took Jion, and Abel-Beth-maachah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the Land of Nephtalie, and carried them captive to Aſſyria. There was a further burden. But yet the whol Land was not, it was only the other ſide of Jordan: at theſe two times was this Scripture fulfil'd.

2 Kings,
15. 19.

Fourthly, *Why doth the holy Ghoſt ſay, The burden of the King of Princes?* In ſpeaking of the burden that was upon the people he doth give the Aſſyrian ſuch an Epithite? Why it ſeems to be a diminution of their burden rather than any aggravation; for he ſpeaks of ſorrowing but a little, as if it ſhould not be ſo great a burden as afterwards ſhould be upon them, noting thus, That they were burdened a while with Taxations from a great King, but they ſhould afterwards come under the power, to be at the wils & luſts of al kind of baſe people, of the very dregs of people: And it is not ſo great an evil to be under the power of men of rank and quality, no not under their oppreſſion, as to be under the oppreſſion of many people, of people that are of very mean quality and condition, the very reſuſe of a Nation, to come to be under their power it's a great deal worſe.

4.
Burden of
the King
of Princes.

And by the way this Note it ſhould teach us, even thoſe that are of mean breeding, and whoſe lives have been very low in the world, of mean condition, if they be put into places of any power and Authority, to take heed how they

behave themselves, for their oppression will be the most grievous to an ingenuous spirit that possibly can be. And there is a great deal of danger in them to grow more oppressing than other men that were born to greatness, and their oppression will be so intolerable as will bring the greatest confusion that possibly can be if that be not well looked to. And therefore here when he would lessen the burden, (saith he) you shall sorrow a little for the burden of the King of Princes.

But what is it? You shall sorrow a little. They complained, but saith God, what do you complain of this? this is but a little burden to that which you are like to have, there's another manner of burden a coming for you than this; and from hence the Notes are these.

Obs. I.

First, *When sinners have brought trouble upon themselves they will complain much, exceedingly troubled; but when they complain they are to consider, that what they feel it is but a little to what's coming after. There are burdens upon you, and you are complaining of these burdens, as if so be that they were the greatest that ever were upon people.* Oh sinner! consider of this when you are complaining of your burdens, know, that these burdens that are upon you may prove to be but very trifles in comparison of what's like to come upon you afterwards, for that's the scope of the holy Ghost here, *They shall sorrow a little for this burden*, as if he should say, There is other manner of sorrow coming after, and so it did, for afterwards the *Assyrians* carried them all away captives, and the basest of all the people came even to set their feet upon them, and therefore saith the holy Ghost, This is but a little: I speak to those that make not up their peace with God, and do not upon those burdens that are upon them return to God: As the mercies of God to his Saints, that which now they have is but a little, they may be said to rejoyce a little for the mercy that now they have. And so the burdens upon the ungodly they are but a little, but if they return not to God!

Use.
Admonitio
to Engl.

God upon what they feel, God hath greater burdens than thoſe are that they ſo vex and fret under.

Secondly, *Taxes and Impoſitions upon mens eſtates are but a little burden in compariſon of being brought under the power of the Enemy.* Obſ. 2

Though there be ſore Taxes upon you, as here there was fifty ſhekels of ſilver laid upon every man that was able, but thoſe Taxes are but little burdens in compariſon of being given up to the power of the Enemy, they would lay burdens indeed upon us, burdens upon our Conſciences, all our Eſtates, all our Lives, all our Liberties, whatſoever we are or have muſt be under their mercy; now we are troubled, but then their little finger will be more heavy than the loins that now we find to be upon us; although we dare not ſay but ſome may find burdens very ſore upon them for the preſent.

Uſe.

A third Note, is this; *That, as Taxes are a burden, but a little in compariſon, ſo the carrying of our Brethren into captivity:* Obſ. 3.
Though we enjoy our Eſtates our ſelves, yet if God laies his hand upon any of our Brethren though in remote parts of the Kingdom, Oh we ſhould account this to be a burden. As not only their Taxations was a burden, but the carrying away of their Brethren that were beyond the River.

If there were no other ſin among us, it were juſt with God to bring the Enemy upon us, and then we ſhould find that there were other manner of burdens.

But there is another burden that we are not ſenſible enough of, and that is the captivity of our Brethren in the remote parts of this Land. Oh! how little ſenſible are we of it becauſe we feel it not our ſelves?

The fourth Note from hence is this, *That it's Gods mercy when we are running on to our utter ruin, not to ſuffer us to plunge our ſelves irrecoverably into miſery, but to bring leſſer evils upon us that by them we may come to betink our ſelves, and if it be poſſible to prevent greater.* Obſ. 4
You ſhall ſorrow a little, I will not undo you preſently; but return to me, or elſe you are ut-

[in that
generality
that they
were car-
ried away]

terly undone, but this is my Mercy, I wil bring afflictions upon you by piece-meal, and if you do not return to me, then you shall be utterly lost; for so this people were, they were carried away captive and never returned to this very day. Oh! doth God come to you in your family, or person, or estate? Oh! let us consider of this.

Obs. 5

And this is the last note from it: *The consideration of little burdens which is upon us to what might be, should cause us to turn to God;* it should break our hearts, and cause us to seek the face of God, that we may prevent greater evils, that otherwise will certainly come; the Lord in his dealing towards us seems as if he were loth to lose us, and that this Nation should perish, Oh that this might work kindly upon our hearts to prevent greater evils, that we might not be made a spectacle of the wrath of God to all the Nations that are round about us.

ab וְחָלַל
לְחַלּוֹת
incipiam
אֶל חָלַל
exalto sig-
nif.

Deut. 2.
25.

And yet further, The words translated, *They shall sorrow a little,* are by some translated, *They have begun a little* for the burden of the King of Princes: And so in Deut. 2. 25. there is the word that comes from the same root, That that they have felt, it is but the beginning of what is like to come, my wrath is let out upon them in some degree already, and do not you see it, how it is begun to burn upon them? and that which was lately before your eyes, by that you may come to beleieve my threatnings.

Obs. 1

Deut. 32.
42. illu-
strated.

Gods judgments against wicked men, are the beginnings of further judgments. In Deut. 32. 42. *I will make my Arrows drunk with blood (and my sword shall devour flesh) and that with the blood of the slain, and of the captives, from the beginning of revenge upon the enemy.* All this is but from the beginning of revenges, when I come so terribly upon them, it is but the beginning of revenges. We are ready to think if there be miserable slaughters, Surely God hath been revenged enough upon this people. No, all this may prove but the begining of revenges. I may say so concerning our selves, Though the Lord many times hath made the sword drunk with

Use for
England.

with blood, yet it may prove to be but the beginning of revenges; truly we cannot ſay that from the time that theſe Judgments have been upon us, that we have begun ſcarce to come in to turn to God, yea, the Eſtate of the Kingdom is far worſe than it was at the beginning of this heavy ſtroke that is upon us. In *Matth. 24. 7, 8.* *Ye ſhall hear of wars, and rumors of wars, and Nation ſhould riſe againſt Nation, and Kingdom againſt Kingdom, and there ſhall be famines and peſtilences, and earth-quakes: all theſe ſhould be but the beginning of ſorrows.*

Secondly, God expects from men, that though they be not ſenſible of his threats, yet when he begins with them in way of execution of his wrath, they ſhould begin a little. Oh! it were well with us if we did prevent Gods heavy wrath by our repentance. *Numbers. 16. 46.* *Moses ſaid unto Aaron, Take a Cenſer, and put fire therein from off the Altar, and put on Incenſe, and go quickly to the Congregation, and make an atonement for them; for there is wrath gone out from the Lord, the plague is begun.* Oh! how ſhould we all make haſt? we cannot ſay only, the plague is begun (the plague of Civil War, which is the greateſt of all kind of plagues) but it hath gone on a great way.

But to proceed.

VER. II.

Because Ephraim hath made many Altars to ſin; Altars ſhall be unto him to ſin.

IT was the Charge of God in Scripture, That there ſhould be but one Altar for Sacrifice, and there was another Altar that afterwards was made for Incenſe, and no further, in *Deut. 12. 3. and 5. ver.* There we have the Charge of God that there ſhould be none other made, *You ſhall overthrow their Altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire, and you ſhall hew down the graven Images of their gods, and deſtroy the names of them out of that place &c.* And

And then, *Take heed to thy self that thou offer not thy burnt offering in every place that thou seest, but in the place which the Lord shall chuse &c.* And in *Dent. 27. 5.* *Thou shalt build an Altar to the Lord thy God, an Altar of stones: thou shalt not lift up an Iron tool upon them.* And according to which *Joshua* did, in *Joshua, 8. 30.* and hence in *Joshua, 22. 11.* Now for the Altar of God, I shall first shew you a little the meaning of them, and then the reason why God would have but this one Altar, in *Exod. 20. 24.* there is an injunction of God for the Altar of Sacrifice; *An Altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offering &c.* Here observe that, That when God would have an Altar made for sacrifice it must be but an Altar of earth, but if it should be of stone, *Take heed that thou liftest not up a tool upon it.* Why, one would think that to carve and paint the stones and do any thing to make it brave would do better, than to have the stones rough; No saith God, whatsoever you may think that to make my Altar brave, by carving of it and painting it, If you do but lift up a tool upon it, you pollute my Altar; all mans devices in the worship of God though they be never so pompous they do but pollute Gods Worship: And they must not go up upon steps (quite contrary to our high Altars) that their nakedness be not discovered therein: Noting that when we come into the presence of God we should take heed of our spiritual nakedness, and the pride and vanity of our spirits in prayer; God would have them make an Altar so as they might not go up upon steps, lest their nakedness should be discovered. But now in *Exod. 27. 1, 2.* there you shall find an Altar of Shittim wood overlaid with Brass; you will say, Why was the first with earth and the other with brass? The reason was, because that the one was to be made when they were in an unsettled condition, and the other to be made afterwards when they were in a more settled condition than formerly, and that it might endure a long time. But mark, it must be according to Gods direction

The Altar
1. of earth.

2. of stone,
no tool on
it.

3. no steps.
High Altars.

Altar of
brass.

rection, except God doth reveal that it ſhould be of Shittim wood and overlaid with braſs they were not to do it.

And then, the ſecond Altar was the Altar of burnt Incenſe, and that you have in *Exod.* 30. 1, 2, 3. verſes, and that was to be overlaid with pure Gold: that of braſs it was, becauſe there was ſin offerings to be offered upon it; but now the Altar of Incenſe it was the Altar that was juſt before the Vail againſt the Mercy-ſeat, where there was only Incenſe offered, which was to ſignifie the Interceſſion of Jeſus Chriſt preſenting his Merits, and the Prayers of all his people to the Father: the prayers of the Saints are compar'd to Incenſe, and there's many things observable about the Altar of God, it is ſaid that there ſhould be four horns, and in *Revel.* chap. 9. ver. 13. *I heard a voice from the four horns of the Golden Altar which is before God.* Now Saint John ſpeaks of after-times that ſhould be, he heard a voice from the four horns of the Altar, that is, from all the prayers of the Saints that were in the four corners of the earth, there came a voice from them all and did ſound, and did great things in the world. Certainly my Brethren, the prayers of Gods Saints in all the corners of the world is that that makes the world ring. It was a Speech of a learned man, If there be but one ſigh come from a gracious heart, it fills the ears of God ſo that God hears nothing elſe; nay, that's observable in *Revel.* 8. 3. about this Altar of Incenſe, *And another Angel came and ſtood at the Altar, having a golden Cenſer, and there was given unto him much Incenſe, that he ſhould offer it with the prayers of all Saints upon the golden Altar which was before the Throne.* Thus we ſee that in our time we are to make uſe of this golden Altar that is before the Throne, all our prayers are to be offered up upon that which was a Type of Jeſus Chriſt, and our prayers except they be mingled with the Incenſe which Chriſt did offer himſelf upon the golden Altar, cannot be accepted, and likewiſe that's very observable

Altar of Incenſe.

Rev. 9. 13. opened.

Rev. 8. 3.

Exod 30.3 ble about it that we reade in *Exod.* 30. 3. that there was a *Crown of Gold* round about it, to typifie the Intercession of Christ, and the prayers of the Saints; you may see by this that Christs Intercession, and the prayers of the Saints that came from faithful hearts, are accounted the very glory of Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ accounts it his dignity and glory, to make Intercession for his People, and to take the poor prayers of his People and present them to his Father; he makes account that his Crown is set upon his head, when you exercise your faith upon Jesus Christ that Christ might present your prayers with his Intercession to the Father, then you set the Crown upon Jesus Christs head; but when you think to be heard your selves, and do not exercise your faith upon Christ, you do (as it were) take off the Crown from the head of Jesus Christ. And that's very observable, the difference between this Altar that was here enjoin'd to be made by *Moses*, and so was afterwards made, and the Altar that we reade of should be in the times of the Gospel.

1. First, Christ he is our Altar in the Gospel, so it is in *Heb.* 13. 10. *We have an Altar that those have no right to eat of it, that serve at the Tabernacle;* that is, such men as shall pertinaciously still stick to the Ceremonies of the Law, they have no right to partake of Jesus Christ.

2. And then further, you shall find that in the Gospel there is a prophesie of the Altar that the Church shall have, in *Ezek.* 41. 22. The Altar that was in the Law, the text saith, it was to be a cubit long, and a cubit broad; but that which must be in the time of the Gospel, must be three cubits high, and two cubits long: and this notes thus much, That there shal be a larger extent of the service of God in the time of the Gospel, than in the time of the Law; that place in *Malachi*, doth much open this, 1. 11. *For from the rising of the Sun even unto the going down of the same, my Name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place Incense shall be offered unto my Name, and a pure offering: for my*

my Name ſhall be great among the Heathen, ſaith the Lord of hoſts.

Another thing observable is, *It was ſet before the Vail by the Ark of the Teſtimony, before the Mercy-ſeat.* It was to ſtand in the holy of holieſt, but juſt before the Vail, right againſt the Mercy-ſeat; and by this you muſt be helped to underſtand that Scripture in *Heb. 9. 4.* which (as ſome underſtand it) ſeems to have ſome variety from this, it is ſaid that the holieſt of all had the golden Cenſer, by which they underſtand the golden Altar, in which the Cenſer was; but we ſhall find that the golden Altar did not ſtand in the holy of holieſt, for we read in *Exod. 30. 6.* *And thou ſhalt put it before the Vail that is by the Ark of the Teſtimony, before the Mercy-ſeat; that is, over the Teſtimony.* And therefore Interpreters reconcile it thus: it is not ſaid here that the golden Cenſer or Altar (if we ſo take it) was in it, but it had it, that is, it was for the uſe of the holy of holieſt, and it ſtood juſt before the holy of holieſt, and juſt againſt the Mercy-ſeat, ſo that the high Prieſt when he was to enter into the holy of holieſt he was to take a Cenſer and Incenſe from this Altar, and ſo go into the holieſt of all.

3.

Heb. 9. 4.

Calvin.

See Beza,
not Major

But this is the Note, in that the Altar of Incenſe ſtands juſt againſt the Mercy-ſeat, and yet there is a Vail between the Mercy-ſeat and it. So when we are to offer up our Incenſe upon the Merits of Chriſt and his Interceſſion, though we cannot by the eye of our bodies ſee the Mercy-ſeat, yet we muſt act our faith upon the Mercy-ſeat; and then that's observable, that the Incenſe muſt be burnt upon this Altar at that very time when the Lamps were to be trim'd and lighted, ſo you ſhall obſerve it in *Exod. 30. 7.* and that was to note thus much to us: That we are to joyn the Word with our Prayers, and not to come ignorantly to God, but labor to enlighten our ſouls with the Lamp of his Word, when we come to offer up our Incenſe to God.

N

Further,

Further, There is a command that no strange Incense shall be offered upon it. This is to teach us thus much : That we must take heed of bringing any thing to God to offer him in Prayer, but what comes from the Spirit of God, only Gods own Incense; Take heed (I say) of bringing un sanctified parts, or any thing but that which is from the Spirit of God.

Lastly, Once a year an atonement was made upon the horns of the Altar, with the blood of the Sin-offering; though the Sin-offering was not offered upon it, yet once a year an atonement was made upon it with the blood of the Sin-offering. This is to note thus much : *That even by our Incense we defile the Altar what in us lies.* And thus I have a little digress, and yet it is still for opening of Scripture to you, to shew unto you the meaning of Gods Altars.

Quest.
Why but
one Altar.

Reas. 1
1. The Al-
tar typified
Christs on-
ly sacrifice.

But why would God have no other Altars, but accounted it so heinous a crime to make any other Altars but those?

The Reasons are these.

First, Because these Altars did typifie these two things.

The Altar of burnt-offerings did typifie this : *That Christ was to be the only Sacrifice*; there should be no other sacrifice to pacifie Gods wrath but only Jesus Christ, who was both the Sacrifice indeed, and the Altar its self, for his human Nature was offered to God upon the Merits, as it were upon the worthiness of his divine Nature : *Heb. 9. 14. How much more shall the blood of Jesus Christ who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God &c.* This Altar did signifie the offering of Jesus Christ. As if God should say, Know that what endeavors you do or can use to satisfy my Justice, and my wrath it is to no purpose, there's nothing but only my Son and that offering that shall satisfy my wrath : and now for them to make more Altars, it was to deny that great point of Religion that there was only the Sacrifice of Christ to satisfy God.

2. No ac-
ception
but by him.

Secondly, This signified, *That in Christ only our services*
which

which are our ſpiritual ſacrifices are accepted of God; there muſt be no Altar, but this for the ſacrifice, and the other for Incenſe; God would have this Doctrine kept pure from that time and ſo ever after, that none of our ſpiritual ſacrifices can be accepted any other way but only as they have reference to Jeſus Chriſt that Altar that the Lord hath appointed.

And then another reaſon why the Lord would have only this Altar for Sacrifice, and the other for Incenſe, and that all the people ſhould come to theſe Altars, it was; *That it might be the bond of the Church*; becauſe the people of the Jews were a National Church, therefore there was to be a National Worſhip, for that all the Nation was to joyn not only in the ſame likeneneſs of Worſhip, but in the very ſame individual Worſhip; and this was the bond of their National Church. Now for my part, I know none living that holds a National Church in theſe daies in this ſenſe, that is to be of Divine Inſtitution, and joyned in one, by Gods commanding any National Worſhip for them. Where there are in Nations a great many of the Saints of God, that they may be called a National Church we diſpute not againſt that; but people when they talk of a National Church, do not conceive the meaning of it; Certainly this was a ſpecial end why God would have them come to this one Altar, it was to be the bond of the National Church, that they ſhould have ſuch a worſhip wherein they were all of them to joyn in one, and this it was that made them a National Church: It is not enough to have the ſame kind of worſhip; as now, we al pray, and reade the Word in all Congregations, we have all the ſame Sacraments, but they muſt joyn in one individual worſhip. If the Nation of the Jews had worſhiped the ſame God after the ſame manner, in divers Temples, and upon divers Altars, this had not been a National bond to them; but by coming up to the ſame Temple, and offering upon the ſame Altars, and when the Sacrifice and In-

Reaſ. 2.

*Vinculum
unitatis
Eccleſiæ.**No-Natio-
nal Church
now.**yet in ſome
ſenſe.*

cense was offered for them all, they were joyned in the very act, all of them in that one thing, this was the thing that did unite them into a Church-union in another manner than any Church-union can be in this world, til we have such a kind of Institution as they had. We have no Institution for worship but where people may personally joyn together: but for thousands of Congregations to be bound by Institution to joyn in the very same bond of worship, in the very same individual act, such an union we have not in these daies, and without the understanding of this aright, we understand not the scope why they had but one Altar for burnt offerings, and one Altar for Incense.

Obj. 1.

But now it may be said, *That it doth not seem to be such a sin to erect Altars, for that's the sin charged upon Ephraim, That they did erect many other Altars; for the Scripture speaks of many Altars that were Gods Altars, 1 King, 19. you know it is the complaint of Elias that they had cast down Gods Altars, They have cast down thine Altars; now this was spoken after the time of the Law when there was but only two Altars appointed by God, and the Prophet did not mean them, the Altar for burnt offerings and Incense.*

1 King. 19

Ans. 1.
of others.

Therefore the Answers that Divines give to this is; That this is spoken of those Altars that the Patriarks and others had built for the honor of God to sacrifice upon, before the time that the Law was given by *Moses*, for that one only Altar of sacrifice, (and here he complains they had cast down those Altars) for it was Lawful before the command was given to build divers Altars, but after the command was given, it was not.

Obj. 2.

Yea, but still the Objection will be, *How could it be a sin to cast down those Altars when they were of no further Religious use? for after the Command of God for that one Altar, then the other were to be demolished; Was it not commended in the godly Kings that they cast down high Places, and cut down Groves? though some of them formerly were for the true Worship of God, yet*

after

after God had appointed a peculiar place for His Worſhip and thoſe other places were abuſed to ſuperſtition, then they were to be caſt down; and ſo there's no queſtion to be made but all other Altars that were built for Religious uſes were to be caſt down, after Gods own Altars were made.

The Answer to it therefore is this; That the evil that *Elijah* complains of, it was the prophaneſs of the people, their caſting off all fear and reverence of God; becauſe they did not caſt down thoſe Altars out of love to God, and his Worſhip, upon this Principle, that they would not ſuffer any thing that might be dangerous to ſuperſtition, that was not the Principle whereby they were acted in caſting them down, but they caſt them down as led thereunto by malice and rage againſt Religion, and to ſatiſfie their luſts; and thus if men oppoſe that which is indeed ſuperſtitious, yet if it be not out of a true love to God and his Honor, if it be not out of a deſire to ſet up and to maintain the true Worſhip of God, but in a bitterneſs and rage, meerly out of ſelf-ends to pleaſe themſelves in a way of revenge, or through any diſtemper, though (I ſay) the thing be evil that theſe men do oppoſe, yet God will not own it as any ſervice to him, it is a ſin in them to caſt down that which ſhould be caſt down, if they do not caſt it down out of a right and gracious Principle; Then what evil is it for men in bitterneſs of ſpirit to oppoſe that which is in its ſelf good, if God account it ſin to oppoſe that which ſhould be oppoſed, if it be through bitterneſs of ſpirit, and not through gracious Principles.

2. The Authors Anf.

A good act in Religion may be evil in the doer.

They have made many Altars:

Whatſoever is made by man in a Religious Worſhip it is rejected of God, there muſt be nothing of mans making in Divine Worſhip; the very ſpirit and life of the ſecond Commandement it conſiſts in this, *Thou ſhalt not make to thy ſelf any graven Image.* That's one inſtance in the matter of Worſhip,

Obſ. Mans inventions in the Worſhip of God rej. God.

The 2d
Commandment.

Worship, but by that we are to understand any thing in Divine Worship, we must not make to our selves; (I say) there lies the very life, and the very spirit of the second Commandment the *making to our selves*; if God will appoint Ceremonies significant to put us in mind of Heavenly things, and stir up our hearts on high, we are to use them with reverence and respect; but if we will presume to do things as God hath done; that's the ground of all superstitious Ceremonies, because they find God makes some, they think that they may presume to make others to imitate God; now it is a sin against the second Commandment for us to presume to make any thing in matters of Divine Worship.

Further, *They have made many.*

Obf. 1.

There's no stop (that's the Note) in superstitious Worship, if men leave the rule they know not where to stay: hence is the multiplying of things thus among the Papists, five hundred Altars in some one Temple. And Austin in his 19th Epistle complains of the multitude of Ceremonies that were in the Church in his time. What complaints would he have now? All things in the Church were full of presumptions, they did multiply one thing after another; and indeed let but the right way once be left and there's no limits. Oh let us take heed how we multiply in Gods Worship; there's much controverſie between the Papists and us, about multiplying in the Worship of God.

Aust. E-
piſt. 19.
ad Ianua-
riū omnia
in Eccleſiā
preſumpti-
onibus ple-
na.

We would have but one M E D I A T O R, they would have many; We would have but one rule of Faith, but they will give power to Pope, and Church to make Articles of faith; we would have but one object of Worship, they would have many; we would have but one Sacrifice, they would have many Oblations for the quick and dead; we would have but one Satisfaction, they would have many; we would have but one Merit, they would have

Controver-
ſy between
us and the
Papiſts a-
bout mul-
tiplying.

have many : And thus by multiplying, the unity of the Church is divided : but we muſt keep to the unity that we find in the Scriptures.

And then further, *They have made many Altars.*

In the opening what a ſin it was to make any other Altar but that God hath appointed, I ſhewed out of *Joſhua*, Iosb. 22.
11. how their Progenitors was ſo provoked when there was made another Altar, they did riſe againſt them and made account to deſtroy them every one, becauſe of making any other Altar beſides Gods; but now they make many Altars. Their Fathers were careful to keep themſelves to one Altar, but their ſucceſſors they make many.

Hence note that, *We are ready to imitate our forefathers in that which is evil, but not in that which is good.* Their forefathers were great enemies and were mightily incenſed againſt adding but one Altar to Gods Altars, but they will not imitate their forefathers in this good thing, in ſtanding for that one true Worſhip of God; ordinarily when any thing is evil there we will imitate our forefathers, but we leave them in that which is good. Obſer.

If you would aſk the reaſon why it came to paſs that their Progenitors were ſo zealous for Gods own Altar, and yet now their children after them make many Altars, the reaſon may be this, which will afford a Note of very great uſe unto us, When their Progenitors came firſt into the Land of *Canaan*, and *Joſhua* aſſoon as they came in he did according to the Commandement of God by *Mosés*, ſet up an Altar, and they ſeeing upon their firſt coming into the Land the goodneſs of God towards them, they were much taken with this; but now after they had enjoyed the Land a while, after they begun to be ſetled, to be warm in their neſts, and to proſper in the Land, then they ventured upon this way of corrupting of Gods Worſhip, and multiplying Altars; and when they had once ventured, and
eſcaped

escaped unpunished, then they thought they were sure : and so by degrees they come to this excess in superstitious Worship.

Obler.

The Note is this, *We must take heed to make any distance of time from the Commandement given, or the Threatning denounced to make us to fear the breach of the Commandement less: They were afraid of the breach of the Commandement soon after it was given; but when there was a distance of time from the Commandement, and when they were settled in a way of prosperity, then they ventured: so that (I say) from hence our Note is, That we must take heed that the distance of time, or our settling in a prosperous condition doth not make us to fear the commandement less than we did fear it at first when we were not in such a settled way.*

Deut. 4.
25.

And for this you have a most excellent Scripture in Deut. 4. 25. saith the text there, *When thou shalt beget children, and childrens children, and shalt have remained long in the Land, and shalt corrupt your selves, and make a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, and shall do evil in the sight of the Lord thy God to provoke him to anger. When thou shalt beget children, and childrens children, and shalt remain long in the Land, then thou shalt make graven images: There was not so much fear that when they came first into the Land, that they should make graven images when they first were delivered out of their bondage, and God had made known his glorious Word unto them, their hearts were a little warm, but after they had lived long in the Land, then they began to forget God and make graven images. Just so it is with us for all the world, when we are newly come out of afflictions, then our hearts are kept a little warm,*

Applicat.

and then we would serve God according to his own way; but after we have continued long in the Land, and been a while in a prosperous condition and pretty well nesh'd, and find all things pretty well about us, Oh! then we begin to be cool and forget the Lord in his way. It hath been alwaies so, and it is so, not only in particular persons and

and Nations, but Churches too, ordinarily when people are delivered from ſuperſtitious vanities and come to worſhip God in his own way, at firſt when they come to enjoy the Ordinances of God in the purity of them, Oh! how glad are they, and they bleſs God, and their hearts are warmed and enlarged, and their hearts do cloſe one with another, and what ſweet union is there together at firſt! but after they have lived a while in the Land, after they have lived a while in the way of God and enjoyed him a little, they begin to grow more cool, and dead, and begin to fall to wrangling and contending, and ſo all that ſpiritualneſs and that heavenly heat that they had before it vaniſhes and comes to nothing: I beſeech you remember this text, *Deut. 4. 25.* Take heed after you have abode a while in ſuch a condition; you thought when you came firſt into it you would never forget God, Oh you bleſſed God, and rejoyced in Gods Worſhip; well, your hearts are taken at firſt, but look to your ſelves, for after you have continued any long time it may prove to be otherwiſe with you.

*Deut. 4.
25. to be
remem-
bred.*

Again further, *Ephraim hath made many Altars: hath multiplied Altars,* ſo *Hierom.* So the Seventy hath gone on in way of multiplication. They had ſome Altars at firſt, and their fore-fathers made ſome, and they afterwards made more, and ſo ſtil every generation did multiply their Altars.

*Multipli-
cavit.
Hierom.
πληθυνει
70.*

From thence the Note is this: *That Idolatry and False-worſhip doth not only continue in ſucceſſion, but in every age there will be an addition.* Oh my Brethren! let the True Worſhip of God then, not only continue, but multiply. Idolaters they will make this no argument, Why ſhould we be wiſer than our fore-fathers? No, they will go beyond their fore-fathers in way of falſe Worſhip, And yet, how many among us wil be pleading againſt Reformation with this argument, Why ſhould not we content our ſelves with what our fore-fathers did? our fore-fathers knew not of

Obſerv.

such new waies of Worship as you tell us of. But now my Brethren, if our fore-fathers reformed a little, let us bless God for what they did, but let us add more, to raise up the Worship of God yet higher and higher, as in *Psal.*

Pf. 71. 14. 71. 14. *But I will hope continually, and wil yet praise thee more and more.* The words may be read thus : *I will ad unto thy praise, O Lord : Thou hast had praise, indeed formerly thou hadst praise from others ; Oh ! but I will do something to add to thy praise, I will praise thee more and more : so every generation should strive to praise God more & more, to add to Gods praise, to find out more of Gods Truths, to add to the purity of Gods Worship, and to cast out superstition more than our fore-fathers have done : it was an argument of a great deal of praise in our fore-fathers to do what they did, and (I say) we are to bless God for them, that the Lord put such a spirit into them, but know that that which was accepted of from our fore-fathers, will not be accepted of from us, God expects that we should add to the praise of God. Men desires to ad more and more to the States of their Progenitors, and so your Children they will add a little to the estates that you leave them ; and so men account it their ambition to raise their families. My Brethren, we should have an holy Ambition by practice of Religion more and more in every age, as *Jehu* said in *2 King. 10. 18.* *Ahab served Baal a little, but Jehu shall serve him much :* So others ; as he said of false worship, though in a fained way ; we should say of the true Worship of God, we have served the Lord a little, but we will serve him more ; we have more mercies than they had, more light than they had, if they served God a little, we will serve him more.*

Pf. 71. 14.
illustrated.

More expected of us than of our Ancesters,

As in our ward estates.

Holy Ambition,

And then, *Ephraim hath made many Altars to sin.*

God still remembers the first and the chief Actors in sin
[*Ephraim*]

[Ephraim] he ſpeaks to the ten Tribes, and yet only names Ephraim, becauſe the Governors were of that Tribe. The chief in a family, by whom the whole family is corrupted, and the chief in a Town or Country, God hath an eye upon them, and though others eſcape they ſhall not, Ephraim hath multiplied Altars to ſin; they intended not to ſin, it was not their intention when they made Altars that they might ſin, they thought they pleaſed God, but God accounts it ſin, and a provocation to him :

Obſ. 1.

And from thence the Note is only this; *That whatſoever names we may give to things, yet (it may be) God will give other names and titles to them;* we may ſay, that it is devotion, God will ſay, it is ſuperſtition; we may ſay, it's good intention, but God may ſay, it is preſumption; we may ſay, it is prudence, and wiſdom, but God may give it another name, and ſay it is temporizing, 'tis time-ſerving, God doth uſe to give other names to things than we do; in the Scripture they call their Images their, *delectable things*: God calls them *deſteſtable things*. No queſtion if you would ask them why they built Altars they would ſay, to the honor of God; but ſaith God, *You built Altars to ſin.*

Obſ. 2.

Iſa. 44. 9.
Ezek. 37.
23.

And then, *Altars ſhall be unto him to ſin.*

Shall be to him.] That's thus; Seeing they will have them, they ſhall have them, they ſhall have enough of hem, let them go on in their way, let them multiply their ſin.

When mens hearts are ſet upon false waies of worſhip it's juſt with God to let them have their deſires to the full; They ſhall have their way that they do contend for: they keep a great deal of ſtir for it, and have it they muſt, they reſuſe to ſee the light, they are prejudiced againſt the way of Gods Worſhip, let them have what they would have; ſaith God, they ſhall have Governors to eſtabliſh what they would have by their Authority, and they ſhall have their

Obſ. 3.

I. Govern-
ors for it.

2 Teachers their Teachers that shall defend by subtil Arguments those things to be lawful, they multiply Altars to sin and they shall be to sin, even to harden them; and so the Seventy seem to take the meaning of these words by their translation of them; whereas you have it, *They shall be to sin*, their Altars shall be *to love*, their hearts are set upon them and they will have them, and love them, and they shall be hardened in them: and this is the heavy judgment of God to give unto men their hearts desires in what is evil; and as it shall be to them for sin, so it shall be to them for their misery for the fruit of sin, for so sin is taken very frequently in Scripture for the fruit of sin, they will have them to sin, and they shall find the fruit of sin by what they are so eagerly set upon them. And thus much for the eleventh verse. It follows.

ἐγένοντο
αὐτοῖς θυ-
νασθεῖα
ἡγάπησε-
1α. 70.

for sin i.e.
for punish-
ment for
sin.

VER. 12.

I have written to him the great things of my Law, but they were counted as a strange thing.

This Verse
especially
to be consi-
dered.

THIS Verse in the reading of it appears a greatness in the very sound of it, and there is as much in it as the sound doth import, and therefore though we pass over other things more briefly, yet because there is very much of Gods mind in this, and we should wrong the Scripture if we should pass over this too slightly.

I have written to him the great things of my Law.

Expicat.

This is made an aggravation of their sin, they multiply Altars to sin, and yet saith God, *I have written to them the great things of my Law*: they find no such things in my Law written to them, this was against the very written Word of God, and what that written Word of God against those many Altars was, that you had the last day, but in that from this connexion that these are made sins because they were

were againſt the written Word of God: from thence the Note is,

That whatſoever is urged to us, or practiſed by us in matters of Worſhip, it muſt have Warrant out of the written Word of God. It was ſin, Why? becauſe I have written to them (ſaith he) the great things of my Law, and they counted it a ſtrong thing; though that which they did had a great deal of ſeeming devotion in it, yet it was otherwiſe than that they found written in my Law.

This Queſtion ſhould be put to any that tender to us any way of Worſhip, or Doctrines of Religion under any ſpecious ſhew whatſoever; Where is it written? *To the Law, and to the Teſtimonie,* (Iſaiah. 8. 20.) *If they ſpeak not according to this Word, it is, becauſe they have no light in them;* Oh they ſeem to be very judicious and wiſe, but if they ſpeak not according to this Word they have no light in them, not only to the Law and Teſtimonies, but to the written Law and Teſtimonies, this muſt be the Standard at which all Doctrines and waies of Worſhip muſt be tried: Many may put fair colours upon their waies, that it is for Common Peace, and a great deal of good may be done by it, and the like; But is it written? Did I ever command it ſaith God? Policy may ſay it's fit, Reason may ſay it's comely, and Experience may ſay it's uſeful, But doth the written Law ſay it ſhould be? Nay, it's not enough to ſay, That we cannot ſay it is forbidden, But where is it written? In matters of Worſhip this is a certain rule. Saith *Tertullian* about the Crowning of the Soldier with Baies; If it be ſaid, It is lawful, becauſe the Scripture doth not forbid it; it may equally be retorted, It is therefore not lawful, becauſe the Scripture doth not command it. No matter what the thing be (ſaith *Luther*) in matters of Religion, but who it is that bids it, who it is that commands it, we muſt look to that; Never argue thus in any point of Religion (I beſeech you conſider, it is a point that hath been, is, and may yet further prove to be of great uſe to us)

never

Obſ.

Uſe.

1. Policy.
2. Reason.
3. Experience may become way; and yet,
4. Religion and the written Word another.

Luther

never argue thus, Why, what hurt is there in it? is it not very comely? I cannot think but it may do a great deal of good, these arguments are weak arguments in matters of Worship: but to all these Arguments we must answer, Is it written? As Christ answered the Devil and his temptations, it was enough to say, it was written thus and thus: So if you can but bring a word written against it, and if you can put them unto it to shew what they would have you to do, let them shew it where it is written; in Exod. 39. we find in that chapter at least ten times it is said, they did according to what the Lord had commanded Moses, and in the conclusion of the chapter Moses blessed the people; the people are blessed when in the matters of Worship they keep unto what is commanded.

And again, As we must not make what we think the rule for worship, so neither the *Opinions of Learned men, nor Custom, nor Antiquity, must be the rule of our Worship, but what's written? *I have written to them the great things of my Law*, they must keep to that; whatsoever use we may make now of the Opinions of Antients and the like, yet if the Antients themselves were alive they would abhor the use that many make of their quotations; Cyprian in one of his Epistles saith, *We must not look what this man, or that man that were before us* (he speaks of his predecessors) *what he did, or what he taught, but what he that was before all, namely Christ, who alone is the Way, the Truth, and the Life*. And so *† Augustin* hath another Speech to the same effect, speaking of the Antients, of learned men, saving all due respect that is due to them, yet for us to think that we may not cast out, even reject from their writings some things, because they were learned men, this must not be admitted, for (saith he) such a one Ple be in respect of the writings of other men, and such a one would I have those that understand my writings to be to me, I will not think of the writings of any other men before, that there should be nothing cast out nor mended, neither would I have

Exod. 39.

43. explained.

* Opinions of the Learned, nor Custom nor Antiquity the Rule of Worship, but the written Word only

† Nobis nō liceat saluā honorificentia quæ illis debetur, aliquid in eorum Scripturæ reprobare atque respuere: talis ego sum in scriptis aliorum tabesq; volo esse intellectores meorum. August.

have any body think ſo of my writings. And ſo *Ambroſe*, Aimbroſe
Where the Scripture is ſilent we muſt not ſpeak. Thus we
ſee that thoſe men for the maintaining of that which is
evil they will make uſe of Quotations, and Antiquities, yet
we ſee the Antients did abhor this, Chriſt and his Apoſtles
they quoted none of the Learned men before them, but *Mo-
ſes* and the Prophets.

But you will ſay, *Though we muſt not take that which other* Object.
men write to be the Rule, yet that which other men write may
help us to underſtand the Scripture.

Now I remember *Luther* hath ſuch a Speech, That Anſw.
Scripture ſhould rather help us to underſtand mens wri- Luther.
tings, than mens writings to underſtand the Scripture;
Many men they will make mens writings to be as a judg,
and to be the rule of underſtanding Scriptures, not the
Judg of Truth, but the rule of underſtanding Scripture,
whereas (ſaith he) the Scripture ſhould rather be the rule
of underſtanding them.

And ſo *Hilary*, (ſaith he) for the ſenſe of Scripture and
underſtanding them, He is the beſt Interpreter, that ra-
ther takes the ſenſe from out of Scripture, and by compa-
ring one Scripture with another, than bring any new ſenſe;
therefore the underſtanding of Scripture is more by Scrip-
ture than by the Writings of any man living. And yet ſtill
no queſtion we may make uſe of the gifts of God in others,
but ſo as to keep us cloſe to the written Word for the Rule,
yea, and for the meaning of the Rule; they may help us
to ſee whether the Scripture will juſtify this Truth, or this
ſenſe, for there lies the miſtake; Moſt people in the world
will think this indeed, That whatſoever any man writes,
if it be contrary to the Word, we may not receive it, but
we muſt underſtand the Word in what ſenſe they take it;
now we muſt not go ſo far; For the Scripture written, is
not only that we might know what the Rule is, but it is
written, that we might underſtand the meaning of the
Rule, and we muſt fetch out the meaning of Scriptures by
Scripture; The Scrip-
ture is both
1 the Rule,
2 the ex-
poſitor to
ſhew the
meaning of
the Rule.

*How mens
writings
may help us
to under-
stand Scri-
pture.*

Scripture: Now so far as the Writings of men will help us to fetch out the meaning of Scripture by Scripture, so far we may make use of them; but we cannot say, this is the meaning, because it is the judgment of such and such Learned men; but such and such Learned men will give you Reasons, and compare one Scripture with another, to shew why it is the meaning of it, and they will shew you the History of the time, and shew you how to compare old and new Testament one with another; and this is the use of Writers for understanding the Scriptures. Then you will say, *Why do we make use of Writers so much?* Why thus, they shew how one Scripture looks towards another, and to compare one Scripture with another, and shew the coherence of things.

The sense of things is to be resolved in the Scripture its self, and therefore we must keep our selves very close to what is written.

*The writ-
ten Word
a singular
blessing.*

Written: It was not so at first, it was delivered but from hand to hand, but afterwards when the Church began to multiply, then the Word was written. And this is a mighty blessing of God, that we may have the mind of God written, so as we may look into it, and search to know the mind of God, by reading it over and over again, and taking it into our hands, when we are lying upon our beds, if we light a Candle in the night, we may be reading and looking into the mind of God; If we should only hear of such a Book that were in the world, that were in China in the uttermost parts of the habitable world, if we should hear that there were such a Book, that God had written, or that God had used men to write by an inspiration of His own Spirit, a Book that was certainly indited by the holy Ghost every word of it, wherein the Lord had revealed the great Counsels of his Will concerning Mans eternal estate, if we should hear that there came such a Book down even from Heaven, and this was in the uttermost parts of the earth, Oh! what a longing desire should we have to
see

ſee that Book? What man or woman but would give their whole eſtate to have a week, or a fortnights time to ſee and read in ſuch a Book as that is; if one could, he would be willing to travel to the end of the world to have the uſe of ſuch a Book as that is. No man need ſay, Shall I go to the uttermoſt parts of the earth? for it is in your hands, it is in your houſes, there is the Book wherein the great God hath written his mind, hath written all things unto you which concerns you Eternal Salvation, hath written there whatſoever he would have you to know and believe to Eternal Life; this it is that you have in your hands: however we prize it now, heretofore it hath been prized at an high rate; How many of the Martyrs would venture their lives to keep but a few Leaves of Scripture in their houſes? But how vile is it then for us to neglect the reading of this written Word? I have read of one *Theodorus* a Phyſitian at *Conſtantinople*, that he ſent to *Gregory* the great, a great ſum of money for the redeeming of Captives, and *Gregory* he commends his Liberality; but though he was ſo liberal and bountiful to redeem Captives, yet he writ back again to him in way of reprehending him for not reading Scripture, and uſes this expreſſion to him, *The Emperor of Heaven, the Lord of the Angels and Men, hath ſent to you, that which concerns your life, and will you neglect to read them with a fervent, with a zealous ſpirit?* He would not but blame him even at that time when he ſent ſuch gifts to him, it did grieve him to think that ſuch a one ſo bountiful to the poor ſhould ſo neglect the reading of Scripture. Many men and women that have excellent parts and yet for all that they find but little favor in the Scripture. There's no books that are written that ſhould take us off from this written Word; although we have cauſe to bleſs God abundantly for what is written, for thoſe excellent helps which we have written, yet we muſt take heed that there be no written book in the world take us off from this written Word of God. *Luther* therefore hath ſuch a ſpeech, *I even*

Theodo-
res a Phy-
ſitian.

Luther
bate

hate mine own Books, and I often times even wish that they were burnt, that they might perish, Why? because I fear lest they should be any way of hinderance to men, or withdraw them from reading the Scriptures: and so he fals a comending the Scriptures: It is the only fountain of all wisdom; and further saith he, I am even terrified, I tremble at the example of the former age, upon this, Because (saith he) many Divines spent so much time in reading of Aristotle and Averres and other Writers and spent so little time in reading Scripture. And the truth is it was that which brought so much ignorance into the world in the time of the School-men which was a time of great learning and yet the time of the greatest ignorance in the Mysteries, of godlines, because they minded Scripture very little, but only turn'd things into Questions, and Disputes that tended not according to Scripture; though we may make use of the labors and gifts of other men, yet look we especially to the written Word, and let not other writings take us off from them, hence we say, the Scripture in way of excellency we must keep our selves to the written Word, and therefore take heed of being led aside by any traditions of men; that's a most detestable derogation from the written Word: but we find in the *Counsel of Trent*, speaking of the Scriptures, saith one of the Cannons of the *Counsel of Trent*, We (saith he) do receive Scripture, and reverence Scripture, but (saith he) moreover we receive and reverence traditions with the same affection of piety and reverence as we do the Scripture. Those are the very words that all Papists are bound to hold, and for them to deny any counsel there were death unto them; It argues men to be in the dark, to mind Traditions so: As the Jews, that's the reason that they vanish so in their thoughts, and understand the Scripture so little, because they mind traditions as much as Scripture, and more; for so they say, that divide a mans life into three parts, one part must be spent in reading Scripture, and two parts more in the two several parts of their Talmoud, which

Schoolmen.

Synodus pa-
ri pietatis
affectu &
reverentia
recipit ac
reveratur.
Concil.
Trid. sess.
4. decret
prim.

I have written.

The Prophet doth not say, he hath written; but he brings in God, saying *I have written*. And that first upon these two reasons.

First, To put the greater emphasis upon it, for it is more for God himself to come and say, *I have written*; as if a Father or Master say to his Child or Servant, I command you to do such a thing, it is more than if a Brother or fellow-Servant should say, my Father hath bidden, or my Master hath bidden you to do such a thing.

Secondly, Whosoever were the Pen-men of the Word, it is *I that write it, I take it upon my self*. The Word is so much his that God claims not only the truths that are in the Word, but the very ordering for the words; and in 2 Pet. I. 21. it is said of holy men, they spake as they were moved by the holy Ghost: they were carried on with a kind of violence as the word signifies, and not only moved, but carried on with a kind of violence to write what they did, both in their speaking and in their writing, *I have written*.

ὁ πῶς πρὸς
ματ' ὁ πρὸς
ἐμῶν.

And I have written to him the great things of my Law.

Obs. I.

From this manner of Phrase, first we are to note this, *That we should look upon the Scripture as concerning our selves*. Here's a letter written to you, and you, and you, every man and woman, therefore it is in the singular number, every man & woman must look upon the Scripture as written to him, or her particularly; God writes to thee, he hath written a letter to thee that thou shouldest not commit Adultery, nor swear, nor steal, and that thou shouldest keep the Sabbath, and that thou shouldest not lye, and that thou shouldest reverence him, and love him, and fear him, and all such kind of rules that God from Heaven hath written to thee, and it is a mervailous help to obedience

and

and to awaken mens conſciences when they apprehend them written to them. *Pſal. 119. 105. Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my paths.* It is not a light that I ſee at a diſtanc a great way off, but as a light that is held to my feet that I make uſe of for the ordering of mine own ſteps.

Pſal. 119. 105. illuſtrated.

Many there are that ſeem to rejoyce in the Word of God as a light to reveal Truths unto them for matter of diſcourſe, but they make it not as a light to their feet, and a lanthorn to their ſteps, as applying it to themſelves, and it follows, *I have ſworn and will perform it, That I will keep thy righteous judgments:* I have look'd upon thy Word as a Lanthorn to my feet, as a thing meerly concerning me; and then I have ſworn and I will perform, I have ſworn that I will keep thy righteous judgments. It's a mighty means to ſtir up a mans ſpirit, and quicken him up to obedience, to look upon the Word as written to himſelf: As thus, when you come to hear out of Gods Word and God directs the Miniſter ſo that you apprehend it as ſpoken to you, it will ſtir and awaken you, Oh me thought this day every word the Miniſter ſpake it was to me. And ſo every word in the Scripture that concerns thee, God writes to thee and conceive it ſo and it will be a mighty means to ſtir thee up to obedience. As if a man be aſleep a great noiſe will not waken him ſo ſoon, as if you call him by his name, *John, Thomas &c.* So when the Word of God comes as to our ſelves in particular it's a mighty means to ſtir the heart.

Uſe.

And Verſ. 106.

An apt ſimile.

Again, *I have written to him:*

To thoſe that were the People of God, though the Word concerns all men, yet it is written to the Church in a more eſpecial manner. As you find in the *Revelations* all the *Epistles* were written to the Churches, and indeed all the Word of God is in a more peculiar manner written

Expoſ.

to the Church, there are some things concerning all mankind, but that which God Aims at in a more especial manner it is to the Church, first to the Church of the Jews, they had that great priviledg that the Orracles of God were committed to them in *Rom. 3. 2.* when the Apostle had taken them off from resting in many of their outward priviledges, he brings an Objection: But then may some say, *What advantage hath the Jew?* He answers, *much every way, chiefly, because to them were committed the Oracles of God:* in this thing they had much advantage of all people in the world, that to them were committed the Oracles of God, God gave *Jacob* his Law, it was the Inheritance of his people; it is written to them, to them is committed the Oracles of God: and this is a great honor which God puts upon his Saints, God makes his Church to be the Keeper of his Records, the Court of Rolls as it were, the Church is as it were the Court of Rolls, and the great Records of Heaven, God commits to his Church, and therefore they should look to it that it be kept faithfully, that there be no corrupting it, for then they do falsifie their trust, Shee hath the keeping of Scripture but gives no Authority to Scripture; in *John, 5. 47.* saith Christ there, *If ye beleieve not Moses writings, how can ye beleieve my words?* Mark, Christ would have the Authority of his words much to be strengthened by the writings that were before in Scripture, *If ye beleieve not his writings, how can ye beleieve my words?* But now the Papists will say, *If ye beleieve not our words, how can ye beleieve their writings?* quite the other way, they will take upon them more than Christ; Christ saith, *If ye beleieve not his writings, how can ye beleieve my words?* Say they, *If ye beleieve not our words, how can ye beleieve their writings?* For they take the Authority of the writing of Scripture to depend upon their words; It is written to the Church, and committed to the Church, but the Authority comes not from the Church. It follows.

I have

I have written the great things of my Law.

By *Law* here we are to underſtand the whol *Word of God*, and not in way of diſtinction of *Law* and *Gospel*, but the whol *Word of God*, and ſo the word ſignifies, it comes from one lignifying teaching; the *Law* is a Doctrin that is taught, and ſo though ſometimes it may be diſtinguiſhed from ſome other parts of Scripture, yet now we are to underſtand the whol mind of God in his Word; when you reade in *Pſal. 119.* how *David* loved Gods *Law*, it is not the ten Commandements, but the mind of God revealed in his Word.

The great things of my Law] The Old Latin hath it the many *Laws*, and the words in the Hebrew ſeems a little to favor, the multiplicity of my *Laws*. And then it ſhould argue theſe two things.

First, *That the Word is full and perfect*; that we have rules for every thing that concerns the ordination of our lives to God in his Word, there's a multiplicity of *Laws* and *Rules* for all our waies.

Secondly, *That there are manifold excellencies in Gods Law*; as the manifold wiſdom of God is in Chriſt, ſo the manifold excellencies of God are kept up together in the Word of God. The *Seventy* tranſlates the word, the *Fulneſſ*, or *Multitude*, and according to that *Tertullin* hath an expreſſion, *I adore the fulneſſ of the Scripture; Ob the multitude of excellent things there are there! and the fulneſſ that there is there!* I find divers turn this word by many words that have excellent ſignifications in them, and indeed the Hebrew word wil bear many expreſſions of it. Some the *Precious thing*, the *Magnificent thing*; the *Excellent thing*; the *Honorable things of my Law*; as in *Acts. 2. 11.* they ſpake the *wonderful things of God*, it is more than the great things, the magnificent great things of God. Now the things of the Word they are glorious and honorable and very great, they

Law, what
i. the whol
word, of
תורה
דבר
docuit.

Multiplic-
ces Leges.
Scribitur
רבו
Legitur.
רבו

πλεθον.
70.
Adoro ple-
titudinem
ſcripturam
Tertul.

τιμωτα-
τα τα μεγα-

they are to be look'd upon as great things, the things of Gods Word; That's the first.

And then especially, *The things that concern Gods Worship are to be look'd upon as great things*, for so it hath reference to them, but the expression aims at that which is more general, the *great things of my Law*, the honorable, magnificent, and glorious things. Now the things of the Law are great things.

First, Because they are from the great God, and they have the stamp of the Authority of the great God upon them, there is a dreadful Authority in every Truth, in every thing that is written in Gods Law, (I say) there is a dreadful Authority of the great God, that binds Kings and Princes in chains, that laies bonds upon the conscience that no created power can, yet this doth; when we come to hear the Word, we come either as to a Sovereign to receive Laws from, or as to a Judge to receive the sentence of death, it hath the dreadful Authority of the great God in it, and therefore every thing that is in the Word is to be look'd upon as a great thing; a piece of Parchment and a little Wax, and a few Lines in it what are they? but having the Authority of the great Seal of *England*, such a piece is to be look'd upon as a great thing: The things of Gods Law are great things, for they have great Authority which goes along with them.

simile

2. And Secondly, *They are great things because of the lustre of the great God that shines in them.* Take all the Creatures that ever God made in Heaven and Earth, and (I say) there is not so much glory of God in Sun, Moon, Stars, Sea, and Plants, and all things in the world, as there is in some few sentences of holy Scripture, therefore they are great things: *Psal. 138.2. Thou hast magnified thy Word above all thy Name.* The Name of God appears in his great work of Creation, and of Providence. We are to look upon Gods Name as very great; yet thou hast magnified thy Word above all thy Name; it's more than all Gods Names besides: It may be

Pf. 138.2
illustrated.

be when there are ſome extraordinary works of God in the world, Thundring, and Lightning &c. we are ready to be affraid, and oh! the great God that doth appear in theſe great works! Were our hearts as they ought to be when we read the WORD, we would tremble at that more than at any manifeſtation of God ſince the world began in all his Works; and if ſo be thou doſt not ſee more glory of God in his Word than in his Works, it is becauſe thou haſt little light in thee; and therefore let the world think of the things of Gods Law that are written, as they wil, yet they are the *great things of his Law*.

Thirdly, *They are the great Myſteries of Gods Will*, the great Counſels of God about the Souls of men, about his way to honor Himſelf, and to bring Mankind to Himſelf, to Eternal life; the great Counſels, great Myſteries that are contained in the Word of God, ſuch as the Angels themſelves do deſire to pry into; as in Prov. 8. 6. it is ſaid of Wiſdom, *Hear, and I will ſpeak of excellent things*. The Word of God ſpeaks of excellent things, right excellent things, ſuch great Myſteries of Gods Wiſdom as ſhould take up our thoughts, yea, and doth take up the Angels, and ſhall take up the Angels and Saints to all Eternity, to be prying into the great things which are revealed in Gods Word:

Pſal. 119. 27. Make me to underſtand the way of thy precepts, ſo ſhall I talk of thy wondrous Works. Mark how theſe are joy-ned together: Make me to underſtand the way of thy precepts, ſo ſhall I talk of thy wonderful works: Why David, couldeſt not thou ſee the wonderful works of God in the book of the creature, in Heaven and Earth? Oh no, *Make me to underſtand the way of thy precepts, and then ſhall I talk of thy wonderful Works.* We many times talk about vain and ſlight things, becauſe we have nothing elſe to talk of; but did we underſtand the way of Gods precepts, we ſhould be furniſhed with diſcourſe of the wondrous works of God.

And then, *It's a great WORD, becauſe that they are of great*

3.

*Pſal. 119.
27. openeth*

4.

Q

great concernment; The things of Gods Law are of great concernment for all our present good or evil depends upon the things of Gods Law, *Prov. 3. 22. They are life unto thy soul, and grace unto thy neck.* So saith *Moses in Deut. 32. 46. Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify unto you this day, for it is not a vain thing, it is your life, they are of great concernment there's a curse annexed to the breach of every thing in Gods Law, Cursed be every one that abideth not in every thing that is written in the book of the Law: Is it not a great matter then? Certainly there is nothing in the Law that is to be look'd upon as a little matter, because the Curse of God is annexed to the breach of every thing that is written in Gods Law, and there we have the casting of our souls for eternity, and is not that a great matter? Did we come to hear the Word, or did we read the Word as the Word by which we must be cast for our eternal estates, we would look upon it as a great Word.*

5. Again, *The things are great things in Gods Law, in regard of the great power and efficacy that they have upon the hearts and consciences of men; when God sets home the things of his Law they will bring down the proudest heart and the stoutest stomach that is, they will enlighten the blindest mind, and convert the hardest heart that is in the world, the Law hath a mighty power upon the soul, and therefore it is great.*

6. Further, *They are great things, because they make all those great that do receive them; they make them great even because they have but the keeping of them, much more than if they receive them; in Deut. 4. 8. What Nation is there so great, that hath Statutes and Judgments so righteous as all this Law that I set before you this day? What Nation so great as you are? why, wherein are we greater than other people? Wherein? In this: What Nation is so great that hath Statutes and Judgments so righteous as all this Law which I set before you this day? This was that which made the People of Israel a great Nation beyond all the Nations in the world; they were*

Deut. 4. 8. applied.

were not great in multitude, but in that they had the *Law* of God, and the great things of his *Law* revealed to them, in this they became a great Nation. The Lord honors a Nation highly but to reveal the things of His *Law* to them; But how great then doth a ſoul come to be, that doth embrace thoſe things, that hath all thoſe great and good things reveal'd in the *Law* made to it as its own priviledg? Surely that ſoul is in an high and honorable condition indeed.

7.

Further, *The things of Gods Law are great in Gods eſteem*; they are great becauſe the great God thinks them ſo: That is to be accounted great that the moſt judicious and wiſe men in the world judg ſo to be; indeed that which a child thinks to be a great thing is no great thing, a child may think a bauble to be a great thing; ſo we may think things great indeed, we think the things of the world are great; for a man to have an eſtate, it's a great matter; to have riches, and honors, and to be ſome-body in the world, we think theſe to be great things; But what are theſe in Gods eyes? God deſpites all theſe things: But that which the great God will think to be a great thing, certainly that's great indeed. Now mark what a high eſteem God hath of his Word in that place where Chriſt ſaith, *Heaven and Earth ſhall paſſ away, but not one jot or tittle of my Word ſhall paſſ away.* As if Chriſt ſhould ſay, The Lord will rather withdraw his power from the upholding of Heaven and Earth, than from making good any one jot or tittle of his *Law*; you may think it a little matter to break Gods *Law*, but God thinks it a great matter, and God would have us to make a great matter of every thing that is written in Gods *Law*. I am the willingeſt to enlarge my ſelf in this, becauſe I know it is the ground of all the wickedneſs in mens hearts and lives, becauſe they look upon the *Law* as a little matter, well though they dare ſin againſt Gods *Law* for the getting of a groat or ſix pence, but God ſaith I will rather loſe Heaven and Earth than one jot or tittle of

Mat. 5. 18
explained.

Isa. 42. 21 my Law shall fall, and he will make it appear one day
noted. that the things of his Law are great things, in *Isa. 42. 21.*
He will magnifie the Law and make it honorable. You may
 vilifie it; a company of wanton spirits we have that con-
 sider not what they say, or what they do, running away
 with the very word of the Law, they think to vilifie it,
Contem- What have we to do with the Law? and under that word
ners of the (not understanding what they mean) they think to cast a
Law An- vile esteem upon the Law; let them do what they will,
tiomians yet God will magnifie his Law; and as it is great in the
 thoughts of God, so it is and shall be for ever great in the
 thoughts of the Saints, the Lord will have his people to
 the end of the world have high thoughts of his Law; the
 Saints they look upon the Law of God so great, as they had
 rather suffer all the miseries and torments that any man
 in the world, any Tyrant can devise, than willingly to
 break the Law in any one thing; surely they account it a
 great matter, when a man shal be willing rather to lose his
 estate, and liberty, yea, and life, to suffer tortures and tor-
 ments, and all because he will not offend the Law of God
 in any one thing, though he might escape all if he would;
 nay, saith a gracious heart, Let all go rather than I will
 venture to break the Law of God in any one thing, surely
 he looks upon the Law of God as very great. Men of the
 world think them to be fools, and why will you be con-
 tent to suffer so much, lose all your friends? what, ven-
 ture to lose your estates which have such a fair way of li-
 ving as you have? what venture a prison, and venture your
 life? the world thinks they are but little things and trifles,
 and men are more precise than wise, and they need not
 trouble themselves so much. If God would but shew to
 you how great a thing his Law is, and all the threatnings
 which are revealed therein, you would account your es-
 tates, and lives and all your comforts as little and poor in
 comparison of that Law; hence in *Revel. 6. 9.* *I saw under the*
Apoc. 6. 9. Altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and
 for

for the testimony which they held. Wherefore were they slain? Surely it was for some great matter that they would venture their lives, it was for the Word of God, and for the Testimony which they held. And thus the Saints of God have ever accounted the Law of God a great thing. *I have written unto them the great things of my Law.*

Hence from what hath been said we may have these Notes for Observation.

Here are Objects in the Word for men of the greatest spirits to exercise themselves about. Many mens spirits are raised up and cannot endure to spend their thoughts and time about small matters; and you shall have some mens spirits are so low that they think it happiness enough if they can be employed in a gutter and get six pence or twelve pence a day to find them bread at night; but others have great spirits: Oh! let all those who have aspiring spirits, and great spirits, let them exercise themselves much in the Law of God, here are objects fit for great spirits, that will greaten our spirits: And indeed there are no men in the world have great spirits, but the Saints they have great spirits, for they exercise themselves in the great counsels of God. We account those men to be men of the greatest spirits that are employed in State-affairs: now the Saints they are lifted up above all things in the world, and they look at all these things as little and mean, and they are exercised in the great affairs of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ; hence it is that the Lord would have Kings to have the book of the Law written, and the Judges; and it is reported of *Alphonſus* King of Arragon that in the midst of all his great affairs of his Kingdom, he read over the Scriptures fourteen times with Commentaries upon them. How many have we, men of great estates, and seem to be of great spirits that scarce mind the Law of God, they look upon the Law of God as under them; it may be if they can have a book of History and Wars, they will be reading over that, but for the Scripture it is a thing that hath little in it.

Another.

Obſ. 1.

*Dcut. 17.
18. 19.
illustrated.
Alphon-
sus King
of Aragon.*

Obs. 2.

Another Note, *It is a special means of obedience to have high thoughts of Gods Law, to convince and humble them for their disobedience: for that's the reason why the Prophet here speaks thus: I have written to him the great things of my Law, but they were accounted as a strange thing. As if he should say, If they had had the things of my Law to have been high in their thoughts, they would never have done as they have done, Psal. 119. 129. Thy Testimonies are wonderful, therefore doth my soul keep them: I have high thoughts of thy Testimonies, I look upon them as glorious things, I see much of thy self in thy Testimonies, and therefore doth my soul keep them. He doth not say, therefore do I keep them; but therefore doth my soul keep them, Oh my very soul is in this, in keeping thy Testimonies, for I look upon them as wonderful things. It's a good sign of the Spirit of the great God in a man when it doth raise him above other things, to look upon the things of his Word as the only great things that are in the world. All flesh is grass (saith the Scripture) but the Word of God endures for ever; there is a vanity in all things of the world, but in that which the Word reveals, Oh! there is an eternity there; we should therefore admire at nothing so as at the Word, and we should greatly delight in Gods Commandements, an ordinary admiration is not sufficient for the Commands of God, for the Law of God, nor an ordinary delight is not sufficient, but great admiration, and great delight there should be in the Law of God: And all things that are taken from Gods Law should be great arguments to prevail with you: It may be there comes such and such temptations to draw you to such and such evils, and you say, they are strong temptations; But that which is in the Law, that should be a greater argument, there is that which is greater in Gods Law than there can be in any temptation whatsoever; Therefore know, it is a dangerous thing for men and women to look at any thing in Gods Law as a little thing, so as to despise it, and to think it is no great matter*

Psa. 119.
129. illustrated.

Isa. 40. 6.
illustrated.

matter though we do ſuch and ſuch things, though we ſhould go from the rule of the Word a little, what great matter is it? are we not all finners? *Prov. 13. 13. Who ſo deſpiſeth the Word, ſhall be deſtroyed.* That is: looks upon any thing in Gods Word as a light thing. It was a ſpeech of one that ſhould ſay when he was convinc'd of a thing that was evil, That he muſt make bold with God Almighty ſometimes. Do not you make bold with Gods Word and ſecretly jeer at thoſe that are ſo nice they cannot venture a little? remember this text in *Prov. 13. 13. Who ſo deſpiſeth the Word ſhall be deſtroyed*; take the leaſt thing that you think ſo deſpicable in Gods Law, and you will venture upon it, but God will make it a great matter, for when you have broke the Law in the leaſt thing all the Angels in Heaven and Men in the World cannot ſatisfie God for that wrong; if they ſhould come and ſay, Lord, here's a poor creature that hath broken thy Law but in this one thing that he thought to be a little matter, we are content to be ten thouſand yeers in torments to ſatisfie for thy Law. Nay ſaith God, this will not do it. Therefore take heed of deſpiling Gods Law, or deſpiling any thing that is reveal'd by him, for certainly it will prove a great matter, and when the Law hath been broken let us not think it is a little matter, that it is but a *Lord have mercy upon me* at the laſt.

*Prov. 13.
13. enligh-
tened.*

Again, The Prophet is convincing them of falſe worſhip, and upon this ground, *Be cauſe they would venture to make Altars to worſhip God in another way than God revealed in his Law*: from thence note,

That the Worſhip of God is a great matter; every thing in Gods Worſhip is to be look'd at as a great matter: They may think it a matter of indifferency whether they do it or no, at leaſt in ſome things; My Brethren, let us learn to know that every thing in the Worſhip of God is a great matter, God looks much upon it, God doth not ſay, that he is jealous for any thing, but for his Worſhip. *Uzzah* he

Obſ. 3.

Uzza a
Levite.

he thought it a little matter for him to go and catch the Ark, and especially having a good intention: It's true, the Law of God is, that it should be carried upon mens shoulders, but may it not as well be carried in a cart? he thought it but a little matter, but it proved a great matter. So, that which we think little in Gods Worship is a great

Uzziah a
King.

matter. So *Uzziah* in 2 *Chron* 26. No question he thought it no great matter to go into the Temple and offer sacrifice, Is it not as good that a King offer it as a Priest? it was in the Temple, and the true Worship, and *Uzziah* because he was a great man he thought he might venture, for there you find that he had an Army of three hundred thousand and seven thousand and five hundred Soldiers; A great Captain. And *Nadab* and *Abihu* no question they thought it no great matter to go and offer strange fire, and it hath not been forbidden in Gods Word, this fire; but it was a great matter before God, for God came with fire from Heaven to destroy them. Hence it is that God in his

Nadab &
Abihu.

Word would set out the glory of his Worship, to that end that he might take off mens hearts from all false worship, he would have them to think the matters of his Worship great things that so they might not have their hearts taken with any false worship, *Ezek* 7. 20. *The beauty of his Ornament he set in Majestie*, (and hereby God aggravates their sin of Idolatry, Oh my Worship and Service I made it as beautiful and glorious as could be) *but they worshiped their Images, their detestable things*. So in *Jer* 17. 12. *A glorious high Throne from the beginning of our Sanctuary*. Mark what follows, *All that forsake thee, shall be ashamed, and they that depart from thee shall be written in the Earth: because they have forsaken the Lord, the Fountain of living Waters*. As if God should say, Oh vile hearts of men when there is such a glorious Worship of mine that I present unto them, yet they turn even to their own vile Inventions, and not regard that glorious Worship of mine. I beseech you Brethren labor to look upon Gods Worship as a glorious thing

Ezek 7.
20. en-
lightened.

Jer 17. 12
illustrated,

thing. But now the Reprehenſion that follows.

The Reprehenſion.

But they were accounted as a ſtrange thing.

Here's the wickedneſs of people, that though God ſhews forth his Glory in his Word, yet they look upon it as a *ſtrange thing*, as a thing that they ſhall get little good by if they do obey, or little hurt by if they do diſobey. We ſhould now have ſhewed wherein this people did account Gods Worſhip a ſtrange thing, and what particulars of Gods Law they accounted ſtrange things: But eſpecially this one among the reſt they did count ſtrange, viz. *that God ſhould ſo ſtand upon it, that He muſt needs be worſhiped in Jeruſalem at the Temple, and at no other Altar whatſoever came of it.* Now becauſe they thought that if the people went to Jeruſalem to worſhip it would be very prejudicial to the State, this was a *ſtrange thing*, & that which we can ſee no reaſon for. So, people are ready to think, if any thing be propounded for the Worſhip of God out of the Word, Yea, but how can it be with peace? it wil cauſe contention now to ſtand upon ſuch things that they conceive may breed ſome trouble, they account it a ſtrange thing that God ſhould require ſuch things as may produce ſuch troubles: firſt men will frame troubles in their own thoughts, and put them upon Gods Worſhip, whereas indeed they do not bring ſuch trouble, but if they be examined they may ſtand well enough with the peace of States. I make no queſtion but this is one eſpecial thing aim'd at by the holy Ghoſt here, That they accounted Gods Law, that very Law of God that required them to worſhip at Jeruſalem as a ſtrange thing, that they could not ſee ſuch reaſon for why they might not venture, and eſpecially when it was for the peace of the Civil State.

Now they accounted this (and the other particular of Gods Law) as a ſtrange thing in Four regards.

The Word accounted ſtrange.

Firſt. *As a thing that had little or no reference to them, as a thing that did not much concern them:* They took not to heart

I. As not concerning the

R

the

the breaches of Gods Law, neither did they much regard the keeping of it, it was no great matter to them, they made account that it was [*ad libitum*] what they did that way, much did not depend upon it, either good or evil: As a stranger accounts it not to concern him what the Master commands: or as we account it no great matter what strangers do, what cloaths they wear, or what course they take, we let them pass by and not mind them.

2. *Strange
in their ap-
prehensions*

Secondly, They accounted them as a strange thing; that is: *They were strange things in their apprehension*, they could see no reason: as we say of a thing that we do not understand that we see no reason of it, it is strange (we say:) so they in the text, that God should say thus and thus when we cannot see that any account can be given for it, they are *strange things*. Strange things that they did not apprehend the reason of, and especially among other things of Gods Law (as was said before) the way of Gods Worship was a very strange thing to them, that God should stand so much upon it that he must be worshiped no where in the way of publick worship but at *Jerusalem*, at the Temple, no sacrifices must be offered but there, yea, that whatsoever come of it though people dwelt a great way off, though as they thought it would bring a great deal of disturbance unto the Kingdom of *Israel* for to go to *Jerusalem* to worship, yet that God should stand so upon it that they must go, and that the Prophets should urge it with that fervencie as they did, that they must go to *Jerusalem* come of it what will, they must venture their peace; they accounted this a strange thing. And indeed it is very strange unto people to think, that we must look to the exact way of Gods Worship whatsoever comes of it, whatsoever trouble or disturbance comes of it, we must not go a hair against the way that God hath set for his right Worship: this is a strange thing to carnal hearts. And *Luther* upon the place seems to interpret it thus, as if this Text had especial reference to this Note that I am now speaking of, saith

Luther

he,

he, They did condemn, and contemn the Prophets Sermons, as a Doctrine that did hurt the Common-wealth, the Sermons that the Prophets taught had in them much anxiety, ſpecially this Doctrine, *againſt going up to Jeruſalem to worſhip*, and they thought it was hurtful to the Common-wealth, and upon that they contemn'd it and damn'd it. What ſtrange thoughts have carnal hearts of many parts of Gods Law? they think them fooliſhneſs, even thoſe very things wherein the Wiſdom of God is revealed to the children of men, thoſe things wherein the deep Counſels of God concerning mans eternal eſtate is revealed, even thoſe are the things which they account fooliſhneſs.

Thirdly, They accounted them a ſtrange thing; that is, *There was no ſutableneſſ between their hearts and the things that the Law did reveal unto them*; they did not make the Law of God familiar to them as that which had a ſutableneſſ to their ſpirits. As if a man that goes into ſtrange company, company which are altogether unſutable to him, yea, perhaps they ſpeak another language, and have altogether other cuſtoms, and diet than we have, we are weary of them, and we turn from them and are tired in the ſociety, for they are ſtrange things unto us that our hearts are not ſutable unto: So when the Law of God is look'd upon as unſutable to the diſpoſitions of our hearts, to our ends, to our waies, our hearts turn from thoſe things as from ſtrange things, whereas indeed our hearts ſhould be familiar with the Word of God, Gods Word and the things therein ſhould not be as ſtrange things to our ſouls, but as the holy Ghoſt ſaith, it ſhould be as *our Kinswoman*, and as *our Delight continually*, Prov. 6. 21. *Bind them continually about thy heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goeſt it ſhall lead thee, when thou ſleepeſt it ſhall keep thee, and when thou awakeſt it ſhall talk with thee*; there ſhould be a familiarity between our hearts and the Commandements of God, to talk with us when we awake, and when we are in

3. No ſutableneſſ between their hearts and the doctrine.

ſunile

Prov. 6. 21. applied

our journey, we should take the Law of God as our companion in our journies, we should awake with it in the night time, and meditate on it day and night; therefore God would have his people in the Law when they rose, to talk of those things; when they go to bed, when they rose up, when they walked in the way, they should be conferring about the things of Gods Law to make them familiar to them, that they might not be estranged from them; God sees that mens hearts would quickly grow strange from his Law, therefore Commanded that by all such means and waies they should endeavor to make the Law to be familiar to them.

4. Use the Word as a stranger, i. e. for our own ends only.

Fourthly, *They use the Law as a stranger*, that is, they use the Law slightly, only for their own turns: As usually men when strangers comes into their Country, (those that have been strangers in other Countries know it) that the Natives of the Country they use them slightly, but if they do seem to shew any respect unto them it is meerly for their own turns: As they may have any advantage by them so far they shew respect to them and no further. So they accounted the Law a strange thing, that is, they made use of the Law but meerly to serve their own turns; so far as obedience to the Law sutes to their own ends, so far they yeilded to it, and no further. Now it's very observable, that those who are so forward in their false worship, that the text saith, they did multiply Altars, and had special regard to their Altars; yet for the Law they accounted that as a strange thing.

Obf. 1.

From whence the Note is: *That superstitious people who are forward and zealous in their own way of Worship, yet they are very slight and negligent in Gods way of Worship, little regard that.* Indeed their own Altars they were accounted great things, that way which they appointed themselves, they did not care what cost they were at in that way; but as for Gods way, that was as a strange thing unto them. We have seen it very evident, and do see it in great part to this day,

day, how thoſe that are very zealous in ſuperſtitious worſhip, are the moſt negligent in Gods way of Worſhip; to inſtance: you know in late times, what a deal of ſtir did men make with their own forms of Worſhip, with their own Ceremonies and Waies of Worſhip which they appointed? how zealous were they in them, and devout were they in them? when they came in publick Congregations to bow and cring, and for other Ceremonies that they laid were only for the decency of Gods Worſhip, how ſtiff were they in them, that the mouths of the moſt Godly Miniſters muſt be ſtop'd if they would not conform to them? But even theſe men would ſcorn and jeer at ſtrictneſs in Gods Waies, and ſlight any man that would be conſciencious in the Waies of God, and they were Rebels that ſhould not yeild to a Ceremony, becauſe it was diſobedience to Magiſtracy. For men to be conſciencious for *little things* (as they thought) in Gods Law, ſeemed ſtrange, When as they would urge men to obey to the *uttermoſt* in little things in *their own*. & ſo in another point that falls out as full and reaſonable for the time, as in the point of their own Feaſtivals and Holy daies, thoſe that would perſecute to the uttermoſt men that ſhould work but to get bread for their families on a *Holy-day*, yet they could publiſh *Books of Sports* for the prophanation of the *Lord's Day*: And thus the great things of Gods Law they were *ſtrangethings*, but their own things (Holy daies) were *great matters*: Surely if it were ſuch a great matter to keep the Feſtival of Chriffs Nativity we ſhould have ſome hint of it from the beginning of *Matthew* to the end of the *Revelations*. but when God gives not the leaſt hint of any ſuch time. And mark it, thoſe people that ſtand moſt upon ſuch Feſtivals, they ſtand leaſt upon Gods Sabbaths; and indeed you ſhall have many people which think it a ſtrange thing for men not to have regard to ſuch Feſtivals. Why may not we keep the birth of our Savior! Now that you might not think it a ſtrange thing do but conſider of this, that when God

hath

*Confirmed
from the
late times
in England*

Holy-daies

Sabbaths.

Chriſtmaſſe

God not to
be imitated
in his wor-
ship.

The Sab-
bath is for
commemo-
ration of al
the parti-
culars of
our redem-
ption.

hath set apart any thing for a holy use it is no strange thing, but it should be strange in man to venture to imitate God in the things of his Worship, to do that in Gods worship which God himself hath done before; thus God hath set apart a holy time, viz. the Sabbath; it is set apart for to solemnize all the work of Redemption, both the Nativity of Christ, and his Life, and Death, and Resurrection, and Ascension, and the coming of the Holy Ghost, all the things about mans Redemption, (I say) God hath set the Sabbath apart to that end that we might have a Holy day to keep the remembrance of them. Now when God hath set one day apart, for man to dare to venture to set another apart, this is presumption. So because Christ hath set outward Elements and Sacraments to be a remembrance for his body and blood; for man to say, Christ hath set apart, a piece of Bread and Wine, why may not I set some other thing apart? This you would all say were a great presumption. Certainly the presumption is the same in the former.

Obj. 2.

Again it is observable in this expression, [*They counted it as a strange thing.*] It is a dangerous thing for men to have their hearts estranged from Gods Law, and from the other Spiritual Truths that are in Gods Word, from the knowledg of that Law which we have been educated in, and that heretofore we have made profession of; for thus it was with this people, they had been educated in Gods Law, and made profession of it, and whatsoever God should reveal, they would obey; but now their hearts were estranged from what they were educated in and made profession of. Oh! let men take heed of this for ever.

U. of Ad-
monition.

You that have had good education, you have been brought up in the knowledg of Gods Law, you have had gracious principles of Gods Law dropt into you in your youth, you have made fair profession of Gods Law, of obedience to it, take heed now of being estranged from those truths

truths that heretofore have been familiar to you, that you have made profeſſion of, and therefore take heed of the ſeveral degrees of the eſtrangement of the heart from the Law of God. I will but only name them, to ſhew how the hearts of men do grow ſtrangers from Gods Law.

First, It fares with his heart, as it doth with a man that grows to be a ſtranger from his friends, A man that hath a familiar friend he doth not eſtrange himſelf ſuddenly, but by degrees, it may be viſit one another leſs than they were wont to do, and yet there is no contention between them, but by degrees they grow to be ſtrange, and then at length they grow to be very enemies. And thus it is with mens hearts, when men grow ſtrange from the Word, that he was acquainted withal before, firſt he begins to call things in queſtion whether things be ſo or no, and eſpecially thoſe things which moſt concern the mortifying of ſin, and the ſtrictneſs of holineſs.

Secondly, He begins upon this, (or rather I think that's the firſt) he begins to abate his delight in the truths of God, he was wont to take abundance of delight to meditate in the Word, Oh how ſweet it was when he awaked in the night ſeaſon, he was wont to take a great deal of delight about conſidering in Gods Word, and when he came into any company; but now it is abated, that's the firſt: Secondly, he calls thoſe things into queſtion that he was very confident in before whether they be ſo or no.

Thirdly, He begins to have ſome hard thoughts of Gods Word: Many men that heretofore did prize the Word, and thoſe Truths that were the joy of their hearts, yet now they begin to have hard thoughts of them.

Yea fourthly, He begins to wiſh that thoſe things which are in the Word were otherwiſe than they are, he cannot ſee enough to perſwade him that the things are true, but his heart coming to be eſtranged from the Word he doth deſire they were not true; as a man that comes to be eſtranged from another, he could wiſh he were further off from him.

The degrees of the hearts eſtrangement from God.
1. Leſs frequent.

2. His delight abates which is alſo the firſt degree

3. Takes up hard thoughts of ſpiritual truths.

4. Wiſheth the things in the word were otherwiſe.

ſimile.

Fifthly,

5. *Harkens
to contrary
doctrine.*

smile.

Fifthly, He begins to listen to those things which are against the Word; there was a time that he would never regard any things that were said against the strictest way of holiness; but now he can be ready to listen to Objections: As a man when he was intimate with his friend, he could not endure to hear any thing that was said against him, but now being estranged from him, he can drink in any thing which is said against him.

6. *Will not
search
thoroughly
into truths*

Sixthly, When the heart is estranged from the Word it will put off thoughts, and through examination of truths, it will not search into things as it was wont to do, but is willing to put off and shut his eyes, and will rather search into any thing that may make against the Truth than that which will work for it. (I beseech you observe these workings of your hearts)

7. *An En-
gagement
in som un-
lawful
practice.*

Seventhly, There will be an engagement in some practice not allowed by the Word. Then a man grows further estranged from his Friend, when he doth not only refrain coming into his company, but he will engage himself into some others that are against him.

8. *Former
weighty
arguments
now weak.*

smile.

Eighthly, It comes to have a slight esteem of what before they thought had great weight in it; there was a time when such & such things were thought to have very great weight in them, but now they are nothing, they are of another Judgment: Just as when a man is estranged from his friend; he thought before he had a great deal of excellency in him, but now he esteems him not; and this is the argument of the estrangement of his heart from him.

9. *Become
open ene-
mies.*

Lastly, If men take not heed when they are by these degrees grown to be estranged from the Truth, they will at length violently reject the Truths of the Word, they will grow to be open enemies to the Truth: Men that have bin familiar with Gods Word, and Truth, and made profession of them, and seem'd to love them most, by several degrees they have grown to be strangers from them, and at length to be enemies to them. Apostates have proved to be
the

the moſt deſperate enemies to the truths of God of any in the world; take heed therefore of the ſtrangenefs of your hearts from the Truths of God leſt you afterwards prove to be an enemy to God; it's an evil thing to account the Law of God a ſtrange thing, but much more to account it an enemy to us, and our hearts to be an enemy to it. *Iſa. 5. 24.* Therefore as the fire devoureth the ſtubble, and the flame conſumeth the chaff, ſo their root ſhall be rottenneſs, and their bloſſom ſhall go up as duſt: why? becauſe they have caſt away the Law of the Lord of Hoſts, and deſpiſed the Word of the holy One of Iſrael. Oh! let us for ever take heed of this, and therefore let our prayer be that of the Prophet David in *Pſal. 119. 18, 19.* Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy Law. And then it follows, I am a ſtranger in the earth, hide not thy Commandements from me. Lord I account my ſelf a ſtranger here in the world, Oh! let not thy Word be a ſtranger to me. I beſeech you obſerve this; Thoſe men and women that account themſelves ſtrangers in the world, will never account the Law of God a ſtrange thing to them; but ſuch men as account themſelves to be the inhabitants of the world, they will have Gods Law to be a ſtranger to them. Obſerve it, and you ſhall find this to be a Note: When your hearts begin to cloſe with the things of the world you do not meditate in Gods Word ſo much as you did before, nor delight to read it; but now, if you can keep your heart from the things of the world, to uſe them as if you uſed them not, then this will be your prayer, Lord, hide not thy Commandements from me; Oh thy Word is ſweet unto me as honey and the honey comb.

One Note more about this; They accounted this as a ſtrange thing; Men they have a ſtrange way now a daies to eſtrange the Law from them and themſelves from the Law; That which their corrupt hearts will not cloſe withal, as for a rule of holineſs, that they will put upon Chriſt as if Chriſt had delivered them from it. This is a ſtrange way indeed of

Vj. against
Antino-
mians.

The Spirit
of God for-
saw this
generation.

Mal. 4. 24
interpreted

estranging themselves from Gods Law, many men will estrange themselves from the Law of God by too much familiarity in the world, but for people to have this way by their familiarity with Jesus Christ, because they come now to know Christ more therefore they should be greater strangers from the Law than they were before; this is a strange way of estranging mens hearts from Gods Law; The holy Ghost foreseeing such a generation which would be in the times of the Gospel, that would boldly assert, that whosoever the people of God were bound to under the old Testament, yet in the new Testament they have nothing to do with the Law of *Moses*, (it is very observable) In *Malac. 4. 2. 4.* the very close of the old Testament, even then when there is a Prophecie of Christ to annex the old Testament and the new together, saith the text there, *Unto you that fear my Name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; to you that fear my Name shall Christ arise, (what then?) then you shall have nothing to do with the Law when Christ arises. Mark then in the 4th vers. Remember ye the Law of Moses; almost the last words in the old Testament, and the Conclusion; as if the holy Ghost should say, now I have done revealing all my mind about the old Testament, and you must never expect any more Prophets nor any further Revelations of my mind till the time of the new Testament, but instead of the Prophets you shall have the Sun of righteousness arise.*

Object. Well then, I hope they shall never have any thing to do with the Law of *Moses* more:

Ans^r. Nay but (saith the holy Ghost) *Remember ye the Law of Moses my servant &c.*

VER. 13.

They ſacrifice fleſh for the ſacrifice of mine offering.

THE Jews might object : Why, how do we account the Law of God a ſtrange thing ? do not we continue in ſacrificing, do not we offer our ſacrifices to God ? why do you ſay, we account the Law a ſtrange thing ? From the connexion therefore this Note may be obſerved.

That men may continue in outward profeſſion and performances of duties of Religion, and yet the great things of Gods Law may be a ſtrange thing to them. They do offer ſacrifices ſtill, and yet they accounted Gods Law as a ſtrange thing to them. Do not think that ſufficient, that you continue in outward profeſſion of Religion; Nay, ſhall I ſay more ? I make no queſtion but a man may continue in outward duties, and yet Apoſtatize from God ſo far as to commit the ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt, and that's evident from the example of the Scribes and Pharifees, that Chriſt charges for commiſſion of the ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt, and yet they did not forſake the Jews Religion, they continued in a great deal of outward ſtrictneſs in Religion, and yet had committed that unpardonable ſin ; therefore you may Apoſtatize far from God, though you do not forſake the publick Ordinances of God.

Obſ. 1.

A man may continue ſtrict in duties, and yet have committed the ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt.

They ſacrifice fleſh for the ſacrifice of mine offering.

God calls all their ſacrifices fleſh : that is, in contempt ; as if he ſhould ſay, you ſacrifice, indeed I have a little fleſh from you, But do you think that is the thing that I intend in my offering ? I expect Faith and Obedience, I expect the Work of Faith relying upon him that is Typified by all the ſacrifices that you offer ; but you wanting that inward ſpiritual worſhip in your ſouls, I account all your ſacrifices but fleſh.

Expoſ.

Obf. 2.

Most people offer nothing up unto God in all their sacrifices, but flesh; their offerings are flesh; That's thus: even in your prayers, in your hearing, in your receiving you offer sacrifice, but all is but flesh, God hath the outward man, and it may be you have fleshly ends in what you do, and fleshly carnal hearts, you offer the flesh; many a man that

Prayer.

hath excellent gifts in Prayer, and seems to offer up an excellent sacrifice to God, but it's nothing but flesh, there's little of the Spirit of God, (of the sanctifying Spirit no-

Preaching.

*thing it may be) a man that perhaps may preach excellently, yet in fleshly wisdom, nothing but fleshly excellency; Oh my Brethren! what are our sacrifices, if they be nothing but fleshly excellencies? you know what the Scripture saith, *All flesh is grass, and as the flower of the field,**

Isa. 40. 3.
interpreted

but the Word of God abides for ever; all a mans parts, all things are but flesh that are not spiritual & the sanctifying Work of the Spirit of God by the Word, but the Word of God abides; that is, the impression of the Word of God upon the soul by the sanctifying Work of Gods Spirit abides for ever, but all flesh is grass. You have got a great deal of fleshly excellency in parts, so as others admire your gifts; I but this flesh is as grass, it will come to nothing, and all your esteem will come to nothing. Oh let us take heed (my Brethren) that our sacrifices be not flesh, for though they may glitter a while in the world, within a few years all will be as grass and will come to nothing.

Gifts and
Parts.

Expos. 1.

But further: They sacrifice flesh for the sacrifice of mine offering.

Why God commanded them to sacrifice flesh, [*For the sacrifice of mine offering*] here seems to be an accusation, not that they sacrificed, but that they sacrificed nothing but the outward part, *flesh*; do not think that that's the main meaning, but this rather: In the burnt offering all the whol sacrifice was tendered up to God; but now there

was

was another offering that was the peace offering, and there that which was offered, ſome part of it did belong to the offerer, ſo as they ſhould eat part of the offering, when they came to offer that they came with their friends, becauſe they were to have ſome of it; now ſaith God, *They ſacrifice fleſh for the ſacrifice of mine offering*: that is: They change mine Ordinance, when as that I look'd for burnt offerings from from them (the whol offering) they will rather offer peace offerings wherein they ſhall have part of the fleſh for themſelves, and that they can take content in. Thus I find Interpreters carry it, and I verily think it to be the meaning of the holy Ghoſt.

2 The Authors Exp.

So that from hence the Note is: *That if there be any thing in Gods Worſhip, wherein any ſelf reſpects may come in, there we are content to be forward; but yet in that we rather aim at ſerving our ſelves then ſerving the Lord, and this uſually doth eat out all true devotion.* When there is a duty to be done, and part of that duty God requires and we ſhew reſpect to God in it, and there's another part wherein we enjoy our ſelves; now ſuch kind of duties as theſe are, men can be content well enough withal: but the truth is, that part which concerns themſelves doth eat out all the true devotion unto God, although the Worſhip of God be pretended, yet ſelf-reſpects they are that the heart is moſt upon; as for inſtance: In keeping of Feſtivals, they lik'd them well enough, and we do not reade ſo much charge for the keeping of them becauſe there was ſomething agreeable to the fleſh: but now for the day of their Faſts ſaith God, *whoſoever afflicts not his ſoul, that ſoul ſhall be cut off*: they had not ſo much mind to that, in the tenth day of the ſeventh month, therefore God threatens, that whoſoever did not afflict his ſoul that day, it ſhould be cut off; and ſo you ſhall find it. That's the reaſon indeed why men are ſo much ſet upon their Feaſtivals, they pretend Gods Worſhip, and honor to their bleſſed Savior and the like, but the truth is, it's the *Belly* that is the thing, and their *Sports*, and the li-

Obſ. 3.

Instance in Feaſtivals

and

Faſts.

cence

*Why
Chr. feasts
is so zealously kept.*

cence to the flesh that they aim at; I warrant you let the time (as now it falls out) be the time of a Fast, it will not be so much regarded, and for any man to keep a Feastival when God by his providence calls to fast, certainly that man regards his own belly rather than God. And that by which all these Feastivals are upheld it is, because that together with a seeming kind of Religion the belly gets so much; but now, such duties where God is served, and Nature denied, they are great testimonies that the Spirit of God is in our hearts in the performance of them; when we can offer up our burnt offerings wholly to God, and our selves denied, they are testimonies that the Spirit of God is in us, as I'll give you an instance in the Story of the first of Kings the 13. you reade of the Lyon that did slay the Prophet that went contrary to Gods Commandement, now it was a special end of God that sent the Lyon to slay him, and that God would give a testimony that the Lyon did not come of a chance to fall upon the Prophet and kill him, Therefore the text observes that the Lyon stood by the carcass and did not meddle with it after it was once slain; it was the nature of the Lyon to have fed upon the carcass, but here was an argument that it was meerly from God what the Lyon did. So, when any man shall perform a duty meerly for God, and in that duty shall deny himself, shall be content to part with honors or preferment, that's a sign God is in it: and so in this publick service, Oh! who would not venture himself for the publick Cause? I but there is a publick Pay too as well as the publick Cause? but now if a man can venture to the uttermost though he hath not that which he expects, yet he is content to venture himself as much as he did before, God is in this man certainly, when he can do a work, and deny himself in that work: And truly we should be willing so to do; Why? because God doth not require of us self-denial that shall do us any hurt, God would never have us deny our selves in things that immediately concern

*An apt
simile.*

1 King 13

*In the pre-
sent War:
The Cause*

The Pay.

cern our communion with himſelf, and our eternal good, God expects ſelf-denial but it is only in thoſe things that concern this preſent life; now when God is ſo propitious to us in requiring duty, that he will let us ſometimes enjoy our ſelves, and when he requires ſelf-denial it is in things that are more inferior, we ſhould not much ſtand upon in denying our ſelves in them. It follows.

God expects Self-denial in temporal, not in ſpiritual things.

But the Lord accepteth them not.

As if he ſaid: I would not have them, I was not pleaſed with them: Whatſoever our ſervices be, *If ſelf be regarded, all is rejected*, not only if ſin be regarded, If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear my prayer, but if *ſelf* be regarded, our ſervices may pleaſe our ſelves but not pleaſe God; and for this you have a famous Scripture in *Amos*, 5. 22. *I will not regard the peace offerings of your fat beaſts*; and this text in *Amos* hath a ſpecial reference to this very thing, and *Amos* was contemporary with *Hosea*, and ſo met with the very ſame thing that here *Hosea* did, this text in *Amos* may help us to underſtand this in *Hosea*, *I will not accept the offering of your fat beaſts*; but obſerve it, they are their *peace offerings*; he doth not ſay, I will not accept the burnt offerings of your fat beaſts: but of your *peace offerings*, becauſe in their *peace offerings* they eat part of it themſelves, and ſaith God, let your offerings be never ſuch fat beaſts, yet I will not accept of them: ſo let your duties be never ſo zealous and abundant, yet if they be only in reſpect of your ſelves, God accepts them not. It follows.

Obſ. 4.

Amos 5. 22.

Amos 5. Hosea 4. contemporaries, conſequent in Doctrine.

Now will I remember their iniquities.

Why they did offer their ſacrifices to the end that their ſins might be done away, and had they exerciſed faith upon Chriſt the true ſacrifice, their ſin ſhould have been done away,

away, yet but they offering in regard of themselves, he saith: *I will remember your sins for all this.*

Obs. 5

From thence the Note is, *That many men may perform great services, may exercise themselves much in holy duties, and yet have their sins as much upon the file before God as before they began all their services.* And this is a sad thing for a man to kneel down and pray with woful guiltiness upon his spirit, and rise up with the same guiltiness; that he kneel'd down withal, and perhaps he hath gone on and prayed, and received the Sacrament for these many yeers together, and every sin that was upon him when he first began is upon him now; whereas those that in holy duties exercise their faith upon Christ their Mediator, and with the act of faith tender up him to the father, whatsoever sins were upon them before, are now done away

How to
exercise
Faith for
Pardon in
holy Duties

The second thing is observable, *viz. That God will remember them, and he will remember them now.*

Obs. 6.

Hence note: *That, however God may forbear to come upon wicked men for their sins for a time, yet God hath his time to remember them all; to remember, that is; by his Judgment to make it appear to them that he doth remember them, when they think that God hath forgotten them.* 1 Sam.

1 Sam. 15
20.

15. 20. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I remember that which Amaleck did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way when he came up from Egypt: I remember what he did; why this was four hundred yeers ago that he spoke of.* We may

Sins of
youth puni-
shed in age

commit a sin when we are young and feel nothing of it till we come to be old and then God may remember it against us; as many a man or woman takes a surfeit when they are young and they feel nothing when their bones are full of marrow and their veins with blood, they feel it not for the present, but when they come to be old, Oh! then it aches in their flesh and bones, and then they remember their licentiousness and carelessness in their youth: and so many young people they commit sin and conscience never troubles them for it, and they they think all is forgot-

Simile.

ten,

ten, Oh! but many yeers after the ſin is committed God remembers it and makes them remember it too; *Joſeph's* brethren had committed that ſin againſt their brother, and it was 22. yeers before we read of any remembring of that ſin. Many things might be ſaid to this point which I cannot now inſiſt upon, only this thing take with you; Let all you that are young ones, yea and others too take heed what you do in ſinning againſt God, for that which you do now may be remembred againſt you many yeers after, perhaps twenty, thirty, forty yeers hence, God may come upon you for what you do at this preſent; me thinks this ſhould be unto young men a mighty ſtrong motive to take heed of wicked lives, *Youths ſins may prove to be ages terrors.*

Uſe to
young ones
and others.

youth ſins
ages terror

Oh! is it not a great deal better that God ſhould remember the kindneſs of thy youth, than the ſins of thy youth? *Jer. 2. 2.* Oh you that are young, begin to be godly betimes, that God may remember the kindneſs of your youth. And oh the bleſſed condition the Saints are in, in compariſon of the wicked: You have ſo many expreſſions, that *God will remember their ſins no more, that he will bury them in the bottom of the Sea;* there are at leaſt a dozen expreſſions in Scripture, and I had ſome thoughts to ſpeak of them all, but I ſee it will be too long to ſpeak of them now, *Of Gods caſting away their ſins (the ſin of his People.)*

Jer. 2. 2.

But further:

Now will I remember them.] That is, in the time of their Holy Duties. Now this is a ſad thing, that God ſhould not only remember a mans ſin, but even then when he is about to offer ſacrifices to God, as in *Heb. 10. 3.* it is ſaid, *that the ſacrifices of the Law did bring ſins into remembrance:* that is, It was a note of their guiltineſs every time they came to offer ſacrifice, and their ſacrifices did not do away their ſins fully, *Now I will remember them.* Then when they offered ſacrifices in in a careleſs and ungodly way, ſurely theſe ſacrifices would bring their ſins into remembrance indeed. Hence obſerve:

Heb. 10. 3
illustrated.

T

God

Obl. 7. *God remembers the sins of wicked men in the performance of Holy Duties in a special manner: and that upon these two grounds.*

Reasons.

1.

Simile

First, *Because we come into Gods presence.* There we come before his eyes in a more especial manner; we are in Gods eyes alwaies, but in Holy Duties the Scripture speaks of it as a more especial drawing nigh to God. If a Malefactor that hath committed a fact a long time since, and he thinks it is forgotten, if he should presume to come into the Kings or Judges eye, this brings into remembrance what such a man is. So wicked men, when they come into Gods eyes, are bold to draw nigh to God in an impudent way although their consciences tells them that they have not sought to do away their sins by faith and repentance, this puts God into remembrance (to speak of God after the manner of Men.)

Secondly, *Because their Holy duties are aggravations of their sin, therefore God wil remember them then rather than at any other time;* as thus: for the Jews (in the text) here to come to sacrifice for their sins: certainly the language of which was this: Lord, I acknowledg I do deserve death my self for the sins which I have committed, and I can only have peace with thee through the sacrifice of thy Son that I beleieve is to come; now for them to come and say so and yet continue in their sin still, this adds impudence unto their sin; it was a sin of infirmity before, it is a sin of presumption now. So, when men shall presume to come before God in prayer, they have lived wickedly heretofore, and now they come before God to testify their respect that they profess they ow to God, and yet their consciences tells them that they do wickedly depart from God in their lives; when they come in prayer certainly they come to confess and name their sins before God, and to tell God what sinners they are, and yet still their hearts do close with their sins, yea what an aggravation is this? yea they came to judg themselves

themselves for their ſins and yet ſtill to continue in them, Oh my brethren if you did but think of the aggravation that ſuch prayer cauſes of our ſins it would make our hearts quake and tremble. But I ſpeak only to thoſe that are Hypocrites and live in their ſins ſtill, their Holy duties do but aggravate their ſins, and therefore no mervail though then God remember their ſins in a more ſpecial manner. We have cauſe to wonder that God doth not come upon ſome of us in his wrath while we are in the miſt of our Holy duties, as *Pilat* came upon the *Galileans* and mingled their blood with their ſacrifices, and ſo while we compare the lives of men with their prayers (I ſay) it is a mervail that God doth not mingle their blood with their ſacrifice; Oh take heed any of you that are conſcious to your ſelves, or your hearts cloſing with any known ſin, take heed the next time you go into Gods preſence in prayer and confeſs your ſins, and judg your ſelves, take heed that God doth not then remember your ſins; *Now will I remember them*, even in the time of their holy duties; you think that's the time of our greateſt pleaſing of God, but it may prove to be the time of Gods remembring your iniquities againſt you.

And viſit their ſins.

God viſits either in Mercies or Judgments, and in the godly viſiting, it is to be underſtood concerning thoſe things that ſeem'd before to be neglected, as in the 21. of *Genetiſ*, God viſited *Sarah* when God ſeem'd to have neglected her: and ſo in *Exod.* 4. he viſited the children of *Iſrael*, that is, when he ſeem'd wholly to have neglected them: and ſo, I will viſit their ſins, though they may think I have neglected them yet I will viſit their ſins. Whence obſerve,

God viſits mens ſins when they think they are moſt neglected by God; God hath his time to make diligent enquiry for

Gen. 21.

Exod. 4.

Obl. 8.

all their sins, in *Exod. 32. 34.* *In the day when I visit, I will visit their sins upon them,* then all their sins shall come up together, and that's the reason that God is content to bear with wicked men and wink at their sins for the present, why? because God hath a day for to visit them, this sin which they commit now, they shall not hear of it till a great while hence, but I have a day to visit, and then this and the other sins shall come. Daies of *visitation* heretofore were wont to be cal'd daies of *vexation*, but the day of Gods *visitation* will be a day of *vexation* indeed to ungodly men. *Micah. 7. 4.* *The best of them is a bryar, the most upright is sharper than a thorn, the day of the Watchmen and thy* *Isa. 10. 3.* *Visitation cometh, now shall be their perplexity. In Isa. 10. 3.* *And what will you do in the day of Visitation, and the Dissolution which shall come from far? To whom will you flee for help? and where will you leave your glory? So I may say to many guil-consciences, Oh thou poor wretched sinful creature, what wilt thou do in the day of Visitation? thou canst tell now, thou canst go home and be merry and do what thou list, but what wilt thou do in the day of visitation?*

It follows: *They shall return (or as some translate) they will return to Egypt.*

1. *It notes their sin.*

And so it notes their sin for which God will visit them, and the course that they would take when God was about to visit them, *They will return to Egypt.* Whither will ye flee in the day of visitation? We will fly into Egypt say they, if the *Assyrians* power grow too great, we will go into Egypt for help, and this may seem to have reference to that story in the 2. of *Kings, 17. 4.* The King of Assyria found conspiracy in *Hoshea*, for he had sent messengers to So King of Egypt.

2. *King. 17. 4.*

Obi. 9.

The Note from hence is this; *Carnal hearts when God is visiting them for their sins they have plots in their heads to shift this way and that way for themselves.* Vain deluded soul! thy thoughts should be, how should I make up my peace with God? how should I seek the face of God? thou art thinking

thinking of this and the other ſhift, whereas thou ſhouldeſt only be thinking of making up thy peace with God. And thus it is with Kingdoms, when God is viſiting Kingdoms you ſhall have many that ſit at the Stern, that all their thoughts are about carnal helps, whereas their great thoughts ſhould be, how they might fall down before God, & ſeek to make peace wth God & the Kingdom: thus it was here, I will viſit them, and they think to return to Egypt. And if you take it as a Judgment, it is threatned that they ſhould return to Egypt, in *Deut. 28.* at the latter end, there it is put in the cloſe of all the former Judgments, *That they ſhould return to Egypt.*

2. Their judgment.
Deut. 28.

The Note is, *That it is one of the moſt dreadful Judgments upon a Nation, after God hath delivered them from a bondage, to deliver them to the ſame bondage again:* And as it was grievous to be delivered into the bondage of Egypt, ſo more to deliver us into a ſpiritual Egypt: If we ſhould again come under the power of thoſe that have perſecuted us and thoſe that have oppreſſed us, that they ſhould have their full power over us again, oh our bondage would be ſeven fold more than it is: And yet what cauſe have we to have our hearts tremble and ſhake when we think of our abuſe of the beginning of Deliverance that we had? but of all judgments let us pray to be delivered from that judgment, that we may never go back again to our priſons.

Obſ. 10.

Applicar.
to Engl.

But juſt with God it is that thoſe who inherit their progenitors ſins, they ſhould inherit their progenitors judgments. You continue in their ſins, you ſhall have their Judgements alſo.

Obſ. 11.

But were they ever carried into Egypt, was this threat ever fulfilled?

Queſt.

No, They were not carried captive into Egypt, but they fled into Egypt for Refuge, and there they lived and died miſerably.

Anſw.

Ier. 44.

Hence obſerve, *All places are places of miſery when God forſakes a people, As all places are comfortable when God is with a people.*

Obſ. 12.

people.

*the answer-
ing our
desires, in
the execu-
tion of
Gods wrath
oftimes.*

people. Many men take their course to seek to refuge themselves, to help themselves, and perhaps they have what they would have in part, but when they have had what they would have, even the having of what they desire proves to be the executiō of the wrath of God upon them: you have a mind to go to Egypt, you shall return to Egypt saith God. It follows in the last verse.

VER. 14.

For Israel hath forgotten his Maker.

THEY have forgotten their Maker, but I'll remember them saith God.

Obs. I.

When men think least of God, then is Gods time to come upon them for their sins, when they are in the greatest security of all: whereas if you would remember your sins God might forget them, or if you would remember God your sins should not be remembred, but you forgetting God, your sins are remembred. It is an abominable thing for us to forget God by whom we had our memory, by whom we are remembred, we should never have been thought of if God had not given us what we have, and therefore for us not to think of God it is a vile sin. Now God is forgotten when he is not honored, minded as our confidence, help, refuge, our only good, when he is not obeyed; if we do but remember sin, we cannot but honor him. How many forget what manifestations once they had of God? they are passed by from them, and other things take up their thoughts; Oh! what an appearing was there of God to many of your souls heretofore, and what conference between God and your souls? what lustre of Gods Spirit upon you? and you thought you should never forget those things; but now other things are in your hearts, Oh! such men and women have cause to fear that they are under much wrath that they should forget their Maker. God challenges remembrance under this title: Remember thy Creator in the

*A sign of
much
wrath.
Eccles. 12.
1.*

the daies of thy youth. There's no creature but the rational creature that can reflect upon the cauſe of their being, the firſt cauſe, and therefore God would not loſe the honor from this creature; Indeed the Ox knows his owner, and the Aſs his Maſters crib, the beaſts can take notice of thoſe that bring them good things; but to reflect upon the cauſe of their firſt being, (I ſay) that's proper to the rational creature, and therefore it is an honor that God expects from you, and will not loſe it.

The word here *Creator*, their *Maker*, it is not now meant for Gods giving them their being, but Gods advancing and bleſſing of them ſo as to bring them to that happy condition that now they were in, *They have forgotten their Maker*, Oh they have forgotten that God that hath advanced them. So I find the words uſed in *1 Sam. 12. 6.* *The Lord that advanced Moſes and Aaron*; but the words in the Original are, the Lord that *made Moſes and Aaron*: that is, when God call'd them to the publick work, God made them. Indeed for a man to be call'd to publick ſervice is a great honor that God puts upon a man, God makes a man then; as many times we uſe that Phraſe our ſelves, if a man be raiſed to any preferment we ſay, ſuch a man is made for ever. Oh that man which God caſts his favor upon, and delights to uſe in publick ſervice, that man is a made-man; *But they have forgotten the Lord that made them.* *1 Sam. 12. 6.*
To be employed in publick ſervice is the making of a man.

That's the Note from hence. *It's Gods favor that makes a man.* You have an excellent Scripture for this in *Iſa. 43. 7.* *I have created him (ſaith God) for my glory, I have formed him, yea I have made him.* Here's theſe three words together. God doth not ſatiſfie himſelf in this, I have given him his being, or all that he hath, but he makes uſe of theſe three ſeveral words to ſignifie how all our good comes from God; I do not know ſuch an expreſſion we have in Scripture, I have brought him out of nothing, then ſecondly I have formed him, I have put beauty and glory *Obſ. 2*
Iſa. 43. 7.

glory upon him, yea and thirdly I have *made* him, I have raised him to the height of all; God hath *created* us all, but hath he *formed* us? We are to look at God, forming as well as at his creation, how God forms and fashions us unto his own will.

They have forgotten God their Maker.

Obs. 2. That should have been the other Note, *That the greater height of excellency God raises any man to, the more vile and wicked is the sin of forgetting God when they are advanced.* Many men will remember God when they are low, but when God hath advanced them, then they forget him, and that's worse. But it follows.

And have built Temples.

How is God forgotten, and they build Temples to the honor of God? You accuse us of forgetting God our Maker; What People in the world doth remember God so as we do, when we are at such charges as we are at.

יהללך
The Church
is Gods
palace.
Obs. 3. The word that is translated *Temples*, it signifies *Palaces*. The Church is indeed Gods Palace: but note from hence, *That when God is worshiped in any way but his own, then God is forgotten.* Papists they set up Images, and they say it is to put them in mind of God; but the truth is, they forget God in it.

Obs. 4. Again, *When mens hearts depart most desperately and furthest off from God, they are many times very forward in superstitious worship.* As we know it in the primitive times, the hearts of men did close most with the power of godliness, and were more sincere in their worship; but afterwards when they came to have peace, in, and after *Constantines* time when they had Temples, then they forgot God most and grew superstitious. When the Christians worshiped
God

God in Dens and Caves of the earth, they remembered God more than when they had glorious Temples built for them. Men that have departed from God and have guilty conſciences, they muſt have ſomething to ſatiſſie their conſciences. Of late our Kingdom, how deſperately was it departing from God, and ſetting itſelf againſt all the power of godlineſs? But never more for building of Temples, that is, more for an outward pompous and glorious Worſhip; but they forſook the Temples of God and perſecuted them, and the Saints of God that were the Temples of the holy Gholt, they were neglected.

*Instanced
in the late
times in
England.*

But what was their reason here (you will ſay) Why is it a ſin to build Temples? *Queſt.*

I anſwer: firſt, It was in them a ſin of *Hypocriſie*.

Anſw.

Secondly, A ſin of *Superſtition*.

*Their ſin
in building
Temples.*

1.

2.

A ſin of Hypocriſie in this, In that they would perſecute thoſe that would go to worſhip at the true Temple, and yet that they would beſtow ſo much coſt in building Temples of their own. And many of the Antients have many large invectives againſt al ſuch as ſhal beſtow a great deal of outward buildings, and yet let the poor Saints want.

2. It was Superſtition in them, they would not go to *Jeruſalem*, to the Temple that God had appointed, yet they would ſet up Temples of their own. There are many that hate the true Temple, and the true Church, that is, the Communion of Saints, yet magnifie the outward buildings, as if there were no other Church but only that. So the Jews, when God would have them build his own Temple there they were ſlack enough: in *Hag. 2.2. & 4.9.* verſ. What a deal of ſtir had God by his Prophet to get them to build his Temple, but their own Temples they would build.

*Hag. 2. 2:
and 4.9.*

But wherein was the ſuperſtition for them to build Temples?

*How ſu-
perſtition
in them to
build Tem-
ples.*

Thus: It is ſuperſtition for any men to put holineſs in any buildings of their own. There were Three things

U

that

that made the Temple at *Jerusalem* an holy Temple; and none of them can be attributed to any other place in the world.

what made the Temple at *Jerusalem* Holy, and Peculiar to it. First, It was set apart by God, so as it was a sin to make any other use of it but holy.

Secondly, It did sanctifie the very duties that were performed.

Thirdly, It was a type of Jesus Christ. There were These three things that were proper to the Temple at *Jerusalem*. And therefore you must learn for ever from hence, that there can be no argument drawn from the Temple at *Jerusalem* for the holiness of Temples now.

No argument therefore from thence for the holiness of Churches

1. It is a superstition in any man to set apart a place so as it should be a sin to make use of it for any common thing.

Praying in Churches no more accepted,

unless with the holy Congregation.

Chrysost. Hom. 79. ad Populum,

Some Heathens against it.

2. Which is worse, and that is, For any man to set apart a place so as to think that the very place should sanctifie the duty, because the Temple of *Jerusalem* did so: Now for a man to think that his prayers are sanctified, because they are within such a building as this is, is superstition: hence a company of poor ignorant people they must go behind a pillar and pray, as if they were accepted the more because of the place. It's true, when we come and joyn with the Church, then our prayers are accepted, because it is in a way of Ordinance. So *Chrysostom* cries out of this superstition, saith he, *Jeremiah* when he stuck in the mud could pray, and *Job* when he was upon the dunghil, and *Jonah* when he was in the belly of the Whale, and therefore why should we tie Gods hearing of prayer to such and such places? Besides dedication, they had enchantments: *Ab auguribus in augurabantur, suis auguriis sanctiorum reddebantur, hoc nisi fieret, Tempora esse non poterant (teste Varrone) sed aedes sacra dicebantur.* Men have been very profuse in this, both Heathens and Christians, and yet I find in some stories that some of the Heathens were against, they thought God too great to be worshiped in any

any place, the principle it ſelf (that God was great) was true, but that therefore he might not be worſhiped in any place that had a cover over the head they thought it too much; ſo it was reported of *Zeno* the Phyloſopher, he thought that Temples muſt not be built. And the *Persians* that worſhiped the *Sun*, they thought that the whole world was the Temple of the *Sun*, and would have no other Temple. And *Xerxes*, the wiſe men perſwaded him to burn all the Temples of *Greece*, becauſe they would ſhut up God within walls, ſo ſome of the Heathens had ſuch thoughts of God, though ordinarily the Heathens were very abundant in building of Temples to their falſe gods: And *Joſephus* reports of *Herod* that he would ſeem to honor God by building a glorious Temple, in the fifteenth Book of his *Antiquity* and the fourteenth Chapter, the Temple that was in Chriſts time it was of *Herods* building, ſaith *Herod*, this Temple wanteth ſixty cubits in height of that which *Solomon* firſt built. And you know the Scripture tels, that thoſe which ſaw his Temple did weep when they ſaw the ſecond Temple which was built, and ſaith *Herod* becauſe it was not ſo glorious as the Temple of *Solomon* was, therefore he would build it and make it as glorious as that was, and ſo he laid out a great ſum of money upon it in building it with white Marble ſtones, twenty five cubits long, and eight cubits high, and about ſome twelve cubits broad, Thus ſuperſtitious he was. And ſo many have been in this way, many if they be ſet upon a way of their own they care not what charge they lay out, but as for thoſe things that concern God they are ſlack enough.

ἱερεὺς οὐκ ἔστιν
 ἡν ὁ κοροδο-
 μέν.
 dogm Zen
 The Per-
 ſians.
 Xerxes
 magi.

Joſephus
 l. 15. c. 14

Pauls-
 work.

And Judah hath multiplied fenced Cities.

Judah ſeeing Gods Judgments upon *Israel*, doth not make that uſe of the Judgments of God upon their brethren, ſo as to conſider their own ſins, and fall down be-

fore the Lord and be humbled in his sight, but when they saw that Gods hand was against the ten Tribes, all their care was to fortifie themselves; let us build strong Cities that we may be delivered from the miseries that are come upon our brethren; This is that which carnal hearts do, when God expects that they should be put upon humiliation and repentance, and look to it and consider whether they have not the same sins among them that were among their brethren, they regarded nothing but carnal means; It's lawful to build strong Cities, to fence our selves against enemies, yea but we had need lay the foundation of them in humiliation and reformation, and when they are built they may not be rested in, for saith God, *I will send a fire and devour them*; we must not bless our selves in any strong places as if that could deliver us from the wrath of God. I have read of a City that fearing their enemies, they sent to a neighbor Prince to come and help them, and charged their Embassadors to tell him their strength they had. I but saith the Prince, have you got a cover to defend you from Heaven, and if not, I will not meddle with you, for you must have something to award Gods wrath from you, because you are so wicked a People, and except you have something to deliver you from that I will not assist you. So though we have strong walls, yet we must look for a cover from Heaven, which is our peace with God through Jesus Christ.

Strong places to be dedicated by prayer and reformation.

A notable story.

Obs. 1.

Again, *They have multiplied fenced Cities.*] For outward safety men think they have never enough, to secure themselves from poverty and from their enemies, but to secure themselves from Gods wrath they think they have enough. In spiritual things we are content with a little, but when it comes to our outward security we think we can never be too safe; and indeed this will be an argument what it is that your hearts are most upon, that that you endeavor to secure your selves most in, that's your chiefest good, that that you would make most sure of, and if any thing in the world

world could make you more ſure you endeavor to do it : a gracious heart will never ſay, May I not go to Heaven though I do no more ? but can there any thing more be done ? doth God require any thing more of his creature ? God that knows all things knows my heart is ready to do all thingt that he hath reveal'd to me, and if there were any thing more to do, Oh that I knew it that I might fulfill even all righteouſneſſ.

But I'll ſend a fire.

Saith the text, *They multiplied Cities, but I will ſend a fire.* Obſ. 2.
When we bleſs our ſelves moſt in our own thoughts we ſhould conſider, but what are Gods thoughts ? we think we will do thus and thus, and I'll ſave my ſelf this way or the other way ; poor wretch ! thou ſaielt thou wilt do thus and thus, yea but think, what if Gods thoughts be otherwiſe at the ſame time ? thou art plotting to ſave thy ſelf, but God is plotting to deſtroy thee : What if there prove to be a diſjunction between Gods thoughts and my thoughts ? Wicked men have plots and devices for themſelves, but God comes with his diſjunctions, I'll do thus and thus. And this we are to hope that God will deal graciously with us in regard our enemies they are full of plots, but God hath been pleaſed to come in with his diſjunctions, Gods thoughts hath not been as their thoughts bleſſed be his Name.

Englands
enemies
ſhould have
conſider'd
this.

But I'll ſend a fire, it may be that they think that their Forts are ſo ſtrong that they cannot be beaten down, but I'll ſend a fire to burn them down. Expof. 1.

But I rather think this fire is meant metaphorically, I'll ſend their enemies which ſhall be as a fire ; and ſo enemies are call'd a fire many times in Scripture. Expof. 2.

And I'll ſend a fire. By whatſoever means fire comes, Obſ. 3.
Gods hand is to be look'd upon in all fires ; If there hath been a fire in your ſtreets or houſes, you will enquire by what

what means it came: look up to God whatsoever the means was, it is God that sends the fire.

And it shall devour their Palaces.

Obf. 4

Brave things they are subject to Gods devouring fire, Oh let us as when the Disciples look'd upon the fair buildings of the Temple and wept, saith Christ, *There shall not be a stone left upon a stone*; so when we look upon our brave Palaces, Oh let us consider how quickly the fire of Gods wrath may come and not leave a stone upon a stone. Let us look up to that place where Christ is gone to prepare mantions for us, and to that building that is eternal in the Heavens, made without hands. And thus through Gods mercy and assistance we have gone through this Eighth Chapter.



CHAP.





 C H A P. IX.

V E R S. I.

Rejoyce not, O Israel for joy as other people ; for thou haſt gone a whoring from thy God, thou haſt loved a reward upon every corn-flour.

HERE begins another Sermon of the Prophets. *Gualter* thinks this to be the ſixt Sermon that the Prophet HOSEA preached to theſe ten Tribes, wherein he yet goes on in the way as he did before, convincing of ſin, and threatning of wrath againſt *Israel* ; and this Sermon was preached in a prosperous time, when *Israel* (the ten Tribes) ſeemed to be in their greateſt ruff of pride & jolity. It refers according to Interpreters to one of theſe two times : Either to ſome ſpecial time when when they prevailed againſt their Enemies, or to the time when they made their League with the *Aſſyrians*.

Gualt.

The time
of this Pro-
pheſie.

The time when they prevailed againſt their Enemies, and ſo it's thought to refer either to the time that we read of in 2 *King*. 13. 15. the time of *Jeboah* when he beat *Ben-hadad*

hadad three times, and recovered the Cities of Israel !

Or that time in 1 King. 14. 13. *And Jehoshaphat King of Israel, took Amaziah King of Judah, and came to Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem; and took all the Gold and Silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the Kings house, and hostages, and returned to Samaria.* This certainly was a time of great jolity and mirth among the ten Tribes, or in the time of Jeroboam 2 King. 14. 28. and so in the time of Pekah 2 of Chronicles, the 28. that was a time of great jolity and mirth to the ten Tribes because of their prevailing, the text saith, *They slew in Judah an hundred and twenty thousand in one day, all valiant men: and the children of Israel carried away captive of their brethren two hundred thousand, women, sons, and daughters, and took also away much spoil from them, and brought the spoil to Samaria.* Now in this time their hearts did swell much, for in vers. 10. the Prophet Obed came to them and saith, *Behold, because the Lord God of your fathers was wrath with Judah he hath delivered them into your hands, and ye have slain him in a rage that reached up unto Heaven.* And now ye purpose to keep under the children of Judah and Jerusalem for bond-men and bond women unto you. But are there not with you, even with you sins against the Lord your God? It seems to be almost the same expression as we have here in the text, as if he should say, Now you purpose to keep the children of Judah and Jerusalem for bond men and bond-women, and you insult and rejoyce, and you think you have gotten the day and you have prevailed; but are there not sins among you? just as he saith here, *Rejoyce not, O Israel, for you are gone a whoring from the Lord, as if he should have said, though God hath given you a victory and you think you have matter of much joy, yet rejoyce not O Israel as other people.*

Expe 1.

As other people. Why?

First, Because the conquest you have gotten it is over
your

your Brethren, therefore rejoyce not as other people, do not rejoyce in your ſlaying your Brethren as other people (the Nations about you) would rejoyce in the ſlaying of them.

That's a ſad War when the Conquerer hath cauſe to be ſad at the very Conqueſt. It were no great matter though if other people had gotten the victory they ſhould triumph, why not? though you have gotten the day, yet theſe Wars are Wars that you ſhould not triumph in, for by this means the Nation of the *Jews* is grown weaker and is in more danger to be made a prey to the common enemies, and therefore do not you rejoyce as other people might rejoyce in ſuch a Conqueſt. And indeed ſuch are our Wars and Victories at this day, we muſt not rejoyce in our Conqueſts as other people, not ſo rejoyce as if French or Spaniards came among us, or as if we were in a forreign Nation, for our Conqueſts weakens our own Nation, it is the deſtruction of our Brethren, and therefore in this we are not to rejoyce as other people in their conqueſts.

Obſerv.

Uſe for
England.

Or ſecondly: according to others it doth refer to that time when *Menabem* made a League with the *Aſſyrian*, 2 King. 15. 9. (for there's no ſuch way to underſtand the meaning of the Prophets than the reference to the time that they preached in, and that they aim at) we read that *Menabem* made a League (that was the King of the ten Tribes of *Iſrael*) made a League with the *Aſſyrian* that great King, that he might be with him to confirm the Kingdom in his hand.

A 3d time

The time
helps to
underſtand
the Pro-
pheſie.

Now people uſe when Leagues of paſſification, and aſſociation are confirmed between them and others, to triumph and rejoyce by outward expreſſions, to manifeſt their great content in them, Oh! now there is a peace made, now we ſhall grow ſtronger than ever we were, and be delivered from many troubles that were heretofore upon us. *Iſrael* bleſſed themſelves in the *Aſſyrian*, in that they had got ſuch a rich and mighty Prince to be on their ſide, that now they had made their peace with him, they

thought they were safe enough, now they were secure, and contemn'd all threats; and derided all that the Prophets should say against them; now the Malignants they lift up their heads and insult over them that would say, Gods Judgments would follow them if they did not joyn with Gods people in the true Worship of God, they sung away care, and none thought of any danger in regard of their sin, they could not endure to hear of any complaining of any thing that might disturb their jolity and conceipted happiness, that they promised to themselves the continuance of. But now saith the Lord by the Prophet, *Rejoyce not with joy as other people*, be not too confident with whom you have made such a sure League, for they may prove to be your undoing, it may prove to be the instrument of the greatest wrath of God against you that ever you had, and indeed he was so, the Assyrians that they made their peace withal, and joyned in League with, and rejoyced much in he proved to be the greatest instrument of wrath that ever the people these ten Tribes had; you have made your peace with him, and now you rejoyce; but you have not made your Peace with God saith the Prophet. What good can Passifications, can Leagues made with men, peace struck with them do, so long as still ye go a whoring from your God, and break your peace and covenant with him daily, Oh rejoyce not therefore!

For observe, *Though Leagues and peace made with such as have been enemies are matter of rejoycing, but they may likewise be such as we may have little cause to rejoyce in*; they have the names of peace and union a while, but suddenly they may change their names, and be call'd a massacre, and ruin, and destruction to a Nation, especially if the foundation of our peace be not laid in reformation; and still a people goes a whoring from their God, rejoyce in no peace that you can make with any whatsoever so long as you go a whoring from the Lord.

That's the Note from thence, if it hath reference to the

time-

*Israels
malignants.*

*Obf.
Leagues
and peace
wherin we
much re-
joyce, may
prove occa-
sions of
sorrow.*

*Uf. Be not
greedy of
peace be-
fore the
time.*

time when people have been worn out with Wars, they are greedy of any kind of peace, they care not with whom they make it, Oh nothing but peace, let us have that, and if there be but a peace concluded once, upon never ſuch unſafe terms, Oh! the Bells muſt ring, and Bonfires muſt be made. This ſeem'd to be the condition of the people at this time, but ſaith God, you are deceived, this peace you have made will prove your undoing, *Rejoyce not therefore as other people, for you have gone a whoring from your God.*

But thoſe Observations that we may take from either of Obſ. I. theſe two times, from the time that they got conqueſts over their enemies, or ſecondly from the time of their peace, put them both together are ſuch as theſe.

First, Carnal hearts rejoyce and bleſs themſelves in their outward preſent proſperity, in their Health, Strength, Friends, as if all were well with them, although they be under much guiltineſs, though there be fearful breaches between God and their ſouls, and how things are between God and them they care not, ſo be it all may be well with them for outward things; this is the guiſe for carnal hearts, they are preſently upon the merry pin, and rejoyce and delight much if ſo be that thy may have but any proſperity, though but for a while, if there be no puniſhment of ſin upon them the guilt and pollution of ſin never troubles them. Saith *Auguſtin* in his twelfth Tract. upon *John*, *The joy of the world is nothing elſe but their wickedneſs unpuniſhed;* if God do not puniſh them preſently then they have a great deal of joy. And in *Amos*, 6. 4. there you have the diſcription of the people of *Iſrael* more at large (for *Amos* propheſied in the ſame time that *Hoſea* did) *They lie upon beds of Ivory, and ſtretch themſelves upon their couches, and eat the Lambs out of the flock, and the Calves out of the miſt of the ſtall, that chaunt to the ſound of the Viol, and invent to themſelves instruments of muſick like David, that drink Wine in bowls, and anoint themſelves with the chief oyntments; but they are not*

Seculi lætitia, eſt impunita nequitia. Aug. in John. tract. 12.

Amos 6. 4.

grieved for the afflictions of Joseph. Well; have not you more reason, you afflicted and distressed Saints, to rejoyce in God without the world, than they have to rejoyce in the world without God? shall not all the wrath of God that hangs over the heads of wicked men, and all the guilt there is upon them damp their joy when they have but meat, and drink, and cloath, and a little outward prosperity, and shall the loss of a few creature comforts, such as many Reprobates have to the full, damp your joy, when you have an interest in all there is in God, in Christ, in the World, in Heaven, in Eternity? when all this is the matter of your joy, what an unreasonable thing is this?

Obf. 2

A second Observation from the words;

Rejoyce not O Israel.] When men are jolly and merry, they should consider, Well, but would God have us to rejoyce? They were jolly and frolick, I but the Prophet comes in the Name of God and saith, Oh! but God is of another opinion. When therefore we find our selves jocular and merry, we should consider, but is God of the same mind that we are of? Many mens rejoycing is so disagreeing to Gods mind, as they dare not so much as consult with God or their own consciences to know what God and conscience will tell them concerning their rejoycing; the more men can prevail with their own consciences to be silent, the more joy they have, yea some there are that have so much guiltiness upon their spirits, as they can have no joy, but at such time when they can take advantage of their own consciences, they are fain to take a time when their consciences are asleep or else they can have no joy; Now cursed be that joy that cannot stand with a free working of a true enlightened conscience.

Obf. 3.

We may prosper, & yet have no cause of joy.

Thirdly, *Men may be in an outward prosperous condition, and yet have little cause to joy in it;* all outward prosperity may stand with the heavy wrath of God hanging over the sinners head, he may be upon the very brink of destruction and yet prosper outwardly, outward prosperity may

come:

come in wrath, the curſe of God, the poyſon of Gods curſe may be in the Wine as well as in the Water, wicked men that are poor have their Water poyſoned, and wicked men that are rich and prosperous have their Wine poiſoned, and what difference is there between drinking poiſoned Water and poiſoned Wine? the ſwelling of carnal hearts in their proſperity it is a ſign that it is poiſoned to them. Outward proſperity as it may come in wrath, ſo it may ſtand with wrath, and make way to wrath, by it the veſſels of wrath may be fitted to deſtruction; God many times hath a further reach in ſuffering wicked men to proſper than they are aware of; as *Eſter*, when ſhe invited *Hamon* to a banquet, he drew ſuch a connexion that he was honored above all the Nobles in the land, and he goes away rejoycing and tells his friends of the great honor that was put upon him; but *Eſter* had another deſign in it than *Hamon* thought of, it was not to honor him but to deſtroy him. So many people whoſe eſtates God raiſes, they make other manner of connexions from Gods dealing with them than ever God intended, they think God hath bleſſed them, when the truth is God is working their ruin and deſtruction; *As a painted face is no argument of a good complexion, ſo a proſperous eſtate is no argument of a good condition.* An apt ſimile.

Rejoyce not for Joy.

Carnal hearts in their joy are ſet upon jolity, their ſpirits inſult and they think of nothing that ſhould moderate their joy, ſo the words import, *Rejoyce not for joy*; if you will rejoyce, let there not be meer joy, but ſome kind of mixture in it; there ſhould be a mixture of reverence and fear in our rejoycing, we ſhould rejoyce with trembling here in this world. Obſ. 1.

Whatſoever bleſſings we have from God, yet (I ſay) we ſhould rejoyce with trembling here, remembering firſt our

unwor- •

unworthiness of any good we have, there should be that put into our joy.

Secondly, Remember the afflictions of our brethren.

Thirdly, Remember the uncertain and the vanishing nature of all these things we rejoyce in.

Put these three things alwaies into the Cup of our Joy, else it will be too sweet, and will clog the stomach.

Mix the Cup of your Joy with these three Meditations.

First, Your Unworthiness of that Mercy.

Secondly, The Meditation of the Affliction of your Brethren, of yours that have done God more service than ever you have done, or are like to do.

Thirdly, That Meditation of the Uncertainty of al these things that your hearts are so taken withal.

These three Ingredients will make a good Mixture, that we shall not surfeit with our condition.

Do not rejoyce : that is, Let there not be pure Joy. But the strength of this expression lies in the other.

Expos. 1.

Rejoyce not with joy as other people.

1. Be not taken with the worlds jolity.

First, Be not taken with the bravery and jolity of other people, to think them happy; Oh! It's a fine life to live as they do. The jolity of other people that are in a different way from us, is many times a great temptation to draw the heart to them, because we see they live merrily and bravely. But that doth not reach yet to the main scope of the Prophet.

Rejoyce not with joy as other people.

2. Imitate them not in waies of rejoycing.

Secondly, Therefore do not rejoyce as they do in their Idolatrous Festivities. Dancing and many waies of jolity that they had in their Idolatrous feasts; we must not imitate Idolaters in their Triumphs. This was the sin of many in the primitive times, because they were come new out of Heathenism, they would turn the Heathenish feasts into Christian feasts, and Heathenish customs whereby they were wont before to honor their Idol gods, into the custom of

of Chriſtians, to honor Chriſt in the ſame way, and they thought this was very good, that whereas before they did honor Idol gods, now they thought if they did but turn this to honor Jeſus Chriſt they thought this would be acceptable. No, this was a great fin, and brought a great deal of evil into the Chriſtian world, and we do to this day ſuffer in that way; if do tender our reſpects to God, though it be in the ſame way that Idolaters do to their Idols, we think we do well: and indeed, here's the original of keeping this time, both of your *Chriſtmaſs* and *New-years-day*, it is but the changing of them from the keeping of the Heatheniſh time, to the honor of Chriſt, and of the Saints. I remember this * time two years, through meer providence that Scripture came in our way, *I will take away their ſolemn feaſts*. And there I ſhewed how theſe came inſtead of the Heatheniſh times. Now ſaith the holy Ghoſt here, *Rejoyce not as other people do*, do not you imitate them, they have their Idolatrous Feaſts, but do not you as they do. We muſt not take liberty to imitate Heathens and Idolaters in their worſhip, though we think to tender our reſpects to God thereby.

* Preached
in Chriſt-
maſs

Rejoyce not as other people.

Not as A people, for the word *other* is not in the Hebrew: Do not you rejoyce as if you were to continue a people ſtill, for you are to be carried captive and not to continue as a people, do not you therefore rejoyce as if you were in a ſetled condition; you have brought your ſelves into ſuch a condition as you are not to look upon your ſelves as a people, Do not *Rejoyce*, no not as a people. It's a miſerable ſpectacle to ſee thoſe who are ready to be deſtroyed to be jolly and merry as if there were no ſuch matter. It is ſaid of the Dolphin, that it ſports moſt when a ſtorm comes: So, when the ſtorm of Gods wrath is ariſing upon a people then they are moſt jolly and merry.

3.
Not as a
people.

The Dol-
phin.

Again. *Rejoyce not in that manner as others do*: others rejoyce & ſcorn at the threats of God: So Ephraim had mixt himſelf

4.
Not pro-
phanely.

himself amongst the Nations, and so did scorn at what was said by the Prophet. Do not rejoyce prophanelly, do not rejoyce slightly, vainely, do not rejoyce presumptuously, promising to your selves continuance in your prosperity.

5. *not having so much cause as others.* But that which I think is especially aim'd at, is this: Rejoyce not as other people, for, you have not such cause to rejoyce as other people. Why? *Israel!* Though you be *Israel*, yet there is not so much cause for you to rejoyce as other Nations have. *Israel* (the ten Tribes) prides themselves in their Priviledges above other people, they despised all people in comparison of themselves. But now God tells them, that their sins had brought them into a worse condition than other people were in, and they must not rejoyce so much as they. And from thence this profitable Note may be raised.

Obler. *Many who look upon others as mean and low, with scorn and contempt in comparison of themselves, yet even these may be in a worse estate than those are whom they look upon so much beneath them.* For instance: It may be you may be a man of parts and of esteem, and a man employed in high employments for Church and Common-wealth: Another is in a mean low condition, is of little use, a weak-parted man, and yet that guilt may be upon you, that you have not such cause to rejoyce as this poor man hath which you so condemn as one laid by and not worth any thing: It may be you have excellent gifts in Prayer, and are an eminent professor; another man or woman is no-body in your eyes, they are no professors at all; I, but if all were known, you have not cause to rejoyce as they have that you condemn.

Secondly. Rejoyce not as other people.

Obler. *Although we enjoy the same blessings that others do, yet we have not alwaies the same cause to rejoyce as others have, though we enjoy the same blessings:* I say, it may be others have more cause to rejoyce in a little than we have to rejoyce in abundance: Do not say in your hearts, Others are merry and chearful,

chearful, Why ſhould not I be ſo too? I have as good an eſtate as ſuch a one hath, & as fair a dwelling as he hath, & as comly children as he hath, why ſhould not I be merry? But it may be ther's not that breach between God & ſuch a one as between God & thee, it may be there is not ſo much guilt upon the ſpirits of ſuch men as upon thy ſpirie, therefore thou muſt not rejoyce as they do; though thou haſt the ſame outward bleſſings that ſuch and ſuch have, yet it doth not follow that thou ſhouldeſt rejoyce as ſuch do; you have cauſe rather to have your thoughts work thus, ſuch and ſuch men are chearful indeed, yea they may, for they have not provoked God as I have done, I am conſcious of thoſe ſins that I beleve they are free from: A man that hath a ſore diſeaſe about him in his body, when he ſees others that are merry he thinks with himſelf, yea indeed you may be merry, but if you felt that that I do you would have little cauſe to be merry.

An ape
ſimile.

3.

The third Note is this: *Rejoyce not as others.*

When men have brought miſery upon themſelves, this is one great argument of their miſery, *That they ſhall ſee others rejoycing, but all matter of joy ſhall be taken from themſelves.* It's not for them to rejoyce as others do, that which is the cauſe of the rejoycing to others you have had and abuſed it, you have abuſed thoſe mercies of God, and now you muſt not rejoyce as other people do: That place is very notable for this in *Luke, 13. 28.* *There ſhall be weeping and gnawing of teeth: When ye ſhall ſee Abraham, and Iſaac, and Jacob, and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God, and you your ſelves thruſt out.* This is the aggravation of our miſery to ſee others in happineſs and in a rejoycing condition, and you your ſelves caſt out, you muſt not rejoyce as others do. As if a man were caſt into a dungeon neer the ſtreet, and there ſhould be a day of triumph, and feaſtivitie and jolitie, there ſhould be much rejoycing, muſick, and bravery without in the Citie, and he lying in a dark dungeon and hears the jolitie of the Citie: this would be a great ag-

Luk 13.
28.

A ſit ſimi-
lude.

gravation to his misery, yes, would he think, such that have their liberty may rejoyce, but I must not rejoyce as they do; and this will be the aggravation of the misery of the damned hereafter, when they shall see *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God, and themselves cast out; it may be the Father shall see his Child in the Kingdom of God, and himself in Hell being cast out; they shall rejoyce eternally when I must be in everlasting torments.

The reason follows: *Rejoyce not as other people: for thou hast gone a whoring from thy God.*

The ground of joy or sorrow is the terms that are between God and us; sin hath an evil in it to damp all our joy, if we would have joy in any thing let us take heed of defiling it by sin; of all sins, the sin of forsaking God, forsaking or corrupting Gods Worship, that's such an evil as is enough to take away the joy of a Nation, whatsoever a Nation hath; if it hath forsaken God in matter of worship it hath little cause of joy, though we should have peace and outward prosperitie, yet if there be not making up of our peace for our going a whoring from God, let there be all the peace that can be made, yet we have little cause to rejoyce in it; but a people retaining the true Worship of God, whatsoever it be in other respects, that people hath cause to rejoyce. Yea and as a whole Nation, so any particular soul, particular men or women, Christians that live in a Nation if their consciences can tell them that they have not complied with the times and gone a whoring from God in waies of false worship as others have done, they have cause to rejoyce whatsoever befalls a Nation; whereas the others that have had complying spirits, though the Nation should prosper never so much, yet they have little cause to rejoyce in that joy: let us therefore be solicitous about nothing so much as about the true Worship of God.

Yea

Yea but this people might ſay, *Suppoſe we have ſome corruptions in the Worſhip of God, yet we do retain more than other Nations do.* Nay ſaith God, *you have gone a whoring; and ſo, you are more guilty than other Nations.* From whence the Notes are :

First, *That which we may think a little matter in corrupting Gods Worſhip, God may call it a going a whoring from Him :* it's true (might they ſay) we may fail in ſome Circumſtances, we go not up to *Jeruſalem* to worſhip, but ſtill we worſhip the true God, and we obſerve the Law of *Mofes*. No (ſaith the Lord) *You have gone a whoring from Me.* Obf. 1.

I but ſtill, "Why may not we rejoyce as other people, "to be ſure we are not worſe Idolaters than they, therefore though we may not rejoyce more than others, yet "why not as others ? they make Idols to be their gods, "there is nothing ſo vile among us as among the Nations "about us ? From whence therefore the Obſervation is this, that God charges them more than others,

First, *That a people may be free from the groſſ evils that there are in other people, and may have many good things that other people have not, and yet may be in a worſe condition than other people.* Obf. 2.

You will ſay, *How can this be ?*

Thus, There may be ſome ſins that they have among them that may have greater aggravations than any ſins that other people have, that may make their condition (all things conſidered) worſe. We here in this Land have much rejoyced heretofore in this, that we have had the Doctrine of Religion ſo pure among us as no people more, and certainly except it hath been through ſome few that of late daies have ſought to corrupt it, certainly that muſt be ſaid, that the Doctrine hath been kept very pure, as the main things of Religion, and in ſome things we have gone beyond other reformed Churches, as in the point of the Sabbath a great deal beyond them ; and ſo there hath been here in *England* for Family Duties, never had God more honor

honor from any people in the world than he hath had from us in many respects; but yet for all this it seems by Gods dealings with us at this day, that God is more provoked with us than with other people, and the truth is, take these one or two things and I think that no people upon the face of the earth can paralel our guilt, not only no people that are now, but never any people since the world began; as that bitterness of spirit in the hatred of the power of godliness and the opposing of it, and persecuting of it, never was any people so guilty as we have been; in other reformed Churches men may be as forward and zealous as they will and they are not persecuted as they are here, & though they kept the Sabbath more loosely, yet they never persecuted men that kept it strictly, & there was never heard that stopping of the mouth of the faithful Ministry so generally as here in *England*, if there were but any stirring Ministry in any place, presently fly upon them; and so it may well be said to us at this day, *Rejoyce not as other people.* God hath spit in our faces, to tell us that our condition is worse than the condition of other people.

Obj&.

Yea but still, *If we be Idolaters* (would the ten Tribes say) *they are so too.*

Ans^w,
No Nation
but Israel
forsook
their gods.

Jer. 2. 10.
explained.

Here was one particular aggravation upon Israel that was not among other people, and that was this, There was no other people would forsake their gods as Israel had forsaken theirs, *Jer. 2. 10.* there was never such a thing as for a Land to change their god, (the worst people, for Kedar was the worst sort of people; they were a vile people; and yet) go to Kedar and see and search diligently whether any Nation hath ever forsaken their Gods, *But you have forsaken Me.* And from thence there may be this Note.

Obj. 3.

That to be constant to ill principles is not so great an evil, as to be false against good principles. (I say) God accounts it not to be so great an evil for men to be constant to their principles though they be evil principles as for men to forsake good

good principles; as now if a man hath been brought up all his daies in ſuperſtition and thinks verily this is the right, certainly this man is not ſo guilty before God as another that hath been educated in the true worſhip of God, and hath made profeſſion of the contrary and yet afterward doth apoſtatize, and backſlide: God had rather that men ſhould keep to their principles though they be evil, than entertain good principles and forſake them: There are none ſo vile in Gods eyes as Apoſtates, there is not ſo much ſordidneſs and baſeneſs of ſpirit in thoſe men that will keep conſtant to their principles though they be evil as in ſuch as will betray their principles that are good.

*A ſpecial
note.*

And then the Principal Obſervation is this; *That the ſins of Gods People are the greateſt ſins of all: the ſins of the Saints are the greateſt ſins of all, and they are to mourn more than any.* In *Amos*, 3. 2. *You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore will I viſit you for your iniquities; your ſins are greater.* And that in *Rom.* 2. 9. *Tribulation and anguiſh upon every ſoul of man that doth evil, of the Jew firſt, and alſo the Gentile.* And we have theſe two excellent texts in *Jer.* 18. 13. *Ask ye now among the Heathen, who hath heard ſuch things? the Virgin of Iſrael hath done a very horrible thing; that's the aggravation that it is the Virgin of Iſrael that hath done ſuch a horrible thing.* But eſpecially that text in *Jer.* 32. 30. *For the children of Iſrael, and the children of Judah have only done evil from their youth.* Now *Hierom* hath ſuch a Note upon this. What, the children of Iſrael (ſaith he) and Judah only done evil from their youth? What, hath none done evil but they? he gives this answer, *He that hath the knowledg of God and goes from it, he alone ſins in the eyes of God, as for unbeleevers they ſin too but it is as if God ſaw it not, and as if God minded it not, as he ſaith in the Acts, that he winks at the daies of their ignorance; but they only ſin that have had the knowledg of God.* We read of the Philiftims that they ventured to

Obſ. 4.

Amos 3. 2

Rom. 2. 9.

*Jer. 18. 13.
expounded*

*Jer. 32. 30.
opened.*

Act. 17.

carry

1 Sam. 6.
7. with 2
Sam. 6. 3.
noted.

carry the Ark upon Carts; God did not manifest himself provoked against them that carried the Ark so, but when the Levites would presume to carry it upon carts, the Lord makes a breach upon them and strikes *Uzzab* with death; he did bear with it in the Philistins, which was a little before, and it may be they presumed and thought the Philistins carried the Ark upon a cart, why may not we? That which God will beare from others he will not bear from his own, their sins are against Covenant, and that's a special thing, there hath not been that solemn Covenant between me and other people as between you and me: This is a mighty aggravation against the sins of Gods people, more than against any people in the world, that they are against Covenant.

Oh! remember this, you that do often covenant with God, when you are in Prayer, Oh! how do you renew your Covenant with God? What promises do you make with God in Prayer, and yet you grow again loose, and false, and vile afterwards? Oh! you must not rejoyce as other people; you look upon a Drunkard that reels in the streets, and hear a Swearer blaspheme the Name of God, yea, but that may not be so great an evil as the vanity of thy spirit, And why? The looseness of thy heart, and those secret sins thou art guilty of, because thou hast so covenanted and bound thy self to God: the Drunkard was never made sensible of his sin and wrath of God upon his conscience; but the wrath of God hath been upon thy conscience, and thou hast engaged thy self to God, if he would shew mercy, Oh! thou would'st walk holily and strictly before him: Now dost thou think that thy sins are as the sins of other people? They never had such Soul-quickning Ordinances, but go up and down to Taverns and Alehouses, and never know what a powerful Sermon meant upon their hearts, and had they such means as thou hast, then it's like it would be with them far better than now; and the Name of God is not so much polluted by them as by thee;

thee; thou that art a Profeſſor of Religion the eyes of all men are upon thee, and in thy ſin thou doeſt not only diſobey God, but thou doeſt pollute the Name of God, thou art a ſtumbling-block unto others, and the cauſe of the hardning of many hundreds in their ſins, and therefore thy ſin certainly is worſe than others. This would be a great Point to ſhew how the ſins of the Profeſſors of Religion are worſe than others, and therefore it is not enough for you to ſay, We are all ſinners: No, we muſt not excuſe our ſelves in this, that others are guilty as well as we, Oh! but conſider what aggravations there is of thy ſin more than there is of the ſins of others; It is a ſign of a very carnal heart to think to go away thus, it's true, I ſin, and others ſin as well as I do; yea, but a true penitent heart will not only conſider that he is a ſinner, but what aggravations are there upon his ſin more than upon the ſins of others? and ſo will lay it upon their hearts, It's true, ſuch and ſuch ſin, but had they what I have had, it would not be ſo with them; my ſin that hath broken through ſo many terrors of conſcience, and that God hath ſought by ſuch means to keep me from my ſin, it is a ſign of the violence of my ſpirit indeed that hath broken through ſo much as I have done: it is therefore an abominable thing to make our profeſſion in holy Duties a Medium to make our ſins leſs, Doeſt thou think that this is a means to make thee eſcape that wrath? Certainly this is a great aggravation of thy ſins.

We have a generation of men among us, that becauſe they are Beleevers, therefore they need no ſorrow for their ſin, they muſt have only joy. Now certainly thy being a Beleever may aggravate thy ſin ſo much the more, and may make it ſo much the more vile, and may pierce thy heart ſo much the more; for if thou beſt a Beleever thou knoweſt what the pardon of thy ſins coſt; therefore, certainly Gods mercies towards thee are the aggravation of thy ſins: The truth is, ſuppoſe our ſins were not ſo great as the ſins of

Some Antinomians noted.

Saints ſhould ſorrow moſt for ſin.

of some other people are, yet it is not alwaies an argument that we may rejoyce as other people.

Quest.

Why so? (you will say.)

Answ.

God hath liberty to damn one for a lesser sin, and save one that is guilty of a greater. Instanced in the examples of Saul and David.

Thus: Suppose our sins be but equal, or less than the sins of other people, yet it is more than we know whether God will pats by our sins so much as by the sins of others, What if God out of his Prerogative damn thee for a little sin, and save others that have committed great sins? We have such examples in Scripture, as in the example of *Saul*, the thing that God cast away *Saul* for, in its self it was not so much as that which *David* had been guilty of, he had been guilty of groser sins than that which God cast away *Saul* for, *Saul* might have said, this is an offence, but is this like Murder and Adultry? What if it be not, God will pardon *David*, and cast away *Saul*. Oh! do not you think to rejoyce as other people do; Why, may not God do with his mercie as he pleases, it is his own; God may pardon one, and damn thee eternally: And therefore let no sinner please himself with what others do, for he is not to do as others do. Now it follows.

Thou hast loved a reward upon every corn-flour.

Expicat.

Israel saw the Nations have a great deal of plentie upon their Corn flours, which they attributed to the serving of their Idol gods, therefore *Israel* thought to comply with them out of the love to the plentie they had, and since the time that she had complied with the Nations about her, she prospered more she thought, and this she loved, by this she was exceeding hardned in her waies of Idolatry, and blessed her self in them. This is the scope. God made many Promises for provision for *Israel* in his service, but they made accompt to get more in following the waies of the Gentiles, than in following Gods waies: Like Harlots, though they have liberal provision from their husbands, yet they hoping to get more by others, they love braverie, and

and jollitie, and they ſee that other Harlots they live more merrilie, and go finer in cloaths, and can be whol nights in chambering and wantonneſſe, and have good cheer, and they love this, and though they have allowance enough at home, yet they leave their husbands and follow whore-maſters. Juſt thus it was with *Iſrael*, though ſhe might have Gods care over her, and proviſion for her in the waies of his Worſhip, yet ſhe beholding the Gentiles living more bravely ſhe would follow after them: At firſt (as you heard) ſhe hired Lovers her ſelf, but now ſhe loves a reward upon everie Corn-flour, now ſhe expects greater advantage; this indeed was the matter that put her on, *the loving a reward upon every corn flour*; ſhe might have many pretences, Why ſhe did not ſee but that ſhe might do ſuch and ſuch things, and they were not directly contrary to Gods Word, but whatſoever ſhe did pretend in the altering the way of Gods Worſhip, yet this was the great matter that prevailed with her heart, it was, *The loving a reward upon every corn flour*: And thus it is with very many that are ſuperſtitious, come and ſpeak to them of their waies, they will have very many fair pretences, they think that they have this and that warrant out of the Scripture for it, but all the while there is a pad in the ſtraw, there is their living, and trading, and eſtates, and friends that they have an eye upon, and it is that which byaſſes their hearts and ſpirits. But divers things have been ſpoken to the ſame purpoſe of this, that we met withal before, only this one Note,

Applicat.

Idolaters do love their Corn and outward proſperity, becauſe it is a reward of their ſervice to their Idols: So the ſweetneſſe of our comfort ſhould be in this, becauſe they come from God as a reward of our faithfulneſſe. Shall Idolaters when they look upon their plenty and attribute it to their Idol gods, ſhall it be ſo much the ſweeter to them? let all our comforts be ſo much the ſweeter to us when we look upon them as coming from God as a reward of our

Obſerv.

faithfulness. In Psal. 119. 56. (saith David) *This I had, because I kept thy Statutes.* You will say, Can we look upon any thing as a reward of our righteousness? Free-Grace, and the Gospel-reward may stand together, God may reward according to our works, though not for our works, and God is pleased to call it so for the encouragement of his people. It is very sweet to those that keep close with God when they prosper outwardly, that outward prosperity if it follow our keeping close with God is very sweet, as the Cypher when it doth follow the figure it doth ad to the Number though it be nothing in its self.

Simile

But now we come to the second Verse.

VER. 2.

The flour and the wine press shall not feed them, and the new Wine shall fail in ber.

Simile.

AS when a Father sees his admonitions not regarded by a stubborn Child he doth withdraw his allowance from him; and sometimes you will deal so with your little children as they shall go to bed without their suppers, to shew your displeasure against them; so God deals here, you have had many admonitions, now I will withdraw your allowance.

Explic.

The flour and the Wine-press] He doth not say, the *Field* but the *Flour*, I will let them bring their *Corn* to the flour; and he doth not say, the *Vine*, but the *Wine-press*; the Notes are these.

Obs. 1.

God often lets wicked men come neer the enjoyment of a mercy, and then cuts it off: as many times the Saints comes neer afflictions, and when they are at the very brink of afflictions then deliverance comes to them.

Obs. 2

Secondly, God doth use to strike wicked men in those things that their hearts are most set upon: They would have their flour and Wine-press to afford unto them plenty, in that thing

thing God ſtrikes them. Now obſerve it, whether in Gods waies that are againſt you God doth not ſtrike you eſpecially in that which your hearts are moſt ſet upon, if he doth, know there's the finger of God, and God would have you take ſpecial notice of it.

The new Wine ſhall fail.

The words are in the Hebrew, *It ſhall lie unto them.* The like word we have in *Hab. 3. 17.* *The labor of the Olive ſhall fail :* in the Hebrew *ſhall lie,* (that is) it ſhall not perform what it ſeems to promiſe to you;

We are ready to promiſe to our ſelves great matters from the creature, or rather think that the creature promiſes much to us, but we ſhall find all but a lye; let us learn to promiſe nothing to us but from the Word that will never lye. Whatſoever you promiſe to your ſelves (I ſay) let it be grounded upon the Word, but if you promiſe to your ſelves great matters from any creature, you will find a lye in the Concluſion. We often lye to God in not answering our good beginnings, and it's juſt with God that the creature ſhould even lye to us, and not accompliſh what they ſeem to promiſe to us. Obf. 3.

Laſtly, *That which men think to get in a way of ſin, they ſhall fail in at laſt;* The way of the wicked ſhall deceive them, they ſhall not find what they expected in the waies of ſin. The Saints they ſhall find more than ever they expected from God, but the wicked ſhall find leſs than that which they expected from the Creature. But there is not much difficulty in this Verſe, therefore we paſs it over briefly. Obf. 4.

V E R. 3.

They shall not dwell in the Lords Land.

simile

BEfore God was to them as a father taking maintenance away from them, leaving them to suffer want; but here his anger encreases, & here he puts them out of his house; as a Father, first he withdraws allowance from his stout Son, and when that will not do, then he thrusts him out of his house: So doth God here, *The wine-press & the flour shall not feed them.* And not only so, saith God, but, *They shall not dwell in the Lords Land.* I will cast them out of my house, cast them out of my Land, I will not suffer Ephraim to dwell any longer there.

I.

Levit. 18.
26.Levit. 25.
23.

First, God would make them to know that it was his Land, and that they were but Tenants at will, and that they did enjoy the Land upon conditions of obedience, as appears in *Levit. 18. 26.* as if he had said, you are Tenants and hold the Land by this Tenure, we reade in *Levit. 25. 23.* of an Ordinance that God made there that no Land in *Canaan* should be sold for ever, but only to the yeer of Jubile, the richest man that was that bought never so much Land they could not buy it for ever, he could not have such a Tenure as runs amongst us, *To have and to hold for ever.* But you will say, what is the reason? it is given in the 23. vers. *The Land shall not be sold for ever: Why? For the Land is mine: for ye are strangers and sojourners with me; I have brought you to the Land, and ye are but sojourners with me in my Land.* God may dispose of all as he pleases. It's a good meditation for us to work upon our hearts thus, That we are Gods Stewards, the Lord is the great Land-Lord of all the world. When you go abroad into the fields, now you that are godly you may see more Land than is your own, but you cannot see more Land than is your Fathers.

*A meditation
in our
walking
into the
Fields.*

Thee

The Lords Land.

It may be ſaid of all the Land in the world, he that is thy Father is the great Land-Lord of the world; howſoever men reſpect their Land-Lords and are afraid to diſpleaſe them, but how little reſpect is given to this great Land-Lord of the world! *The earth is the Lords and the fulneſſ thereof*; well, but though all the world be the Lords Land, yet this Land was the Lords Land in a peculiar manner, the Land of *Canaan* it was the Lords Land more peculiarly in many reſpects:

*Canaan
the Lords
Land in a
ſpecial
manner.
Reaſ. I.*

First, It was a Land that God had eſpied out for his People. In *Ezek. 20. 6.* as a ſpecial place. God was over looking all the world; where ſhould I have a good Land (or Country) to ſet my People, and the text ſaith, *God had eſpied it out.*

Secondly, It was the Land of Promise, therefore the Lords Land, in *Heb. 11. 9.* *By faith he ſojourned in the Land of Promise as in a ſtrange Country.* No Land in Scripture is called the Land of Promise but only this.

Thirdly, *The Lords Land*, it was a Land given by Oath in *Gen. 24. 7.*

Fourthly, It was a Land which the Lord brought His People into by a ſtrong hand and outſtretched arm: Many Scriptures you have for that, as *Ezek. 20. 6. &c.*

Fifthly, It was a Land divided by Lot, and ſo the Lords Land; not only all the Land, but every piece in it, and the poſſeſſion that any man had it was ordered by God himſelf, by Lot.

Sixthly, It was a Land wherein God dwelt himſelf, a Land that God call'd his own reſt, *Here will I reſt for ever*, *Pſal. 132.* and God ſware unto them that hardened their hearts in the wilderneſs, that they ſhould not enter into

hiſs

his Rest, that is, that they should not enter into the Land of *Canaan*. It was the Land wherein there was the Ordinance of God, and the Worship of God, and his Honor dwelt there, and so it had a peculiar blessing upon it above all the Land that was upon the face of the earth.

7. Seventhly, It was a Land over which Gods eye was in a more special manner; there's a most excellent Scripture for that in *Deut. 11. 12.* *A Land which the Lord thy God careth for, the eyes of the Lord thy God are alwaies upon it, from the beginning of the year even to the end thereof.*

8. Yea further, This Land, it was a Typical Land of the Church, and a Typical Land of Heaven, for so the Apostle speaking of that place in the *Psalms*, *That he swore in his wrath, that they should not enter in his Rest.* The Apostle in *Heb. 3. 7.* seems to apply it unto the Rest of the Church of Heaven, and in *1 Chron. 16. 15.* *Be ye mindful alwaies of his Covenant, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations, even of the Covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his Oath unto Isaac, and hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a Law, and to Israel for an everlasting Covenant; saying, Unto thee wil I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance.* Mark; that he would give unto them the Land of *Canaan*: This must be remembered to a thousand generations, and it must be a Law to Israel afterwards. Certainly this notes that God aim'd at more by the Land of *Canaan* than meerly to possess them of so much ground.

9. Further, Yet there are divers Titles that are given to this Land; it is called an *Holy Land* in *Zach. 2. 12.* and it is called a *good Land* in *Numb. 14. 7.* that which is translated in your books *exceeding good*, is, *very very good*: it's a *pleatiant Land* in *Ezek. 7. ult.* a *garden of Eden* in *Joel, 2. 3.* a *glorious Land* in *Dan. 11. 16. & 41. verses.* and the *glory of all Lands*, *Ezek. 20. 15.* and a *goodly heritage* *Jer. 3. 19.* Now (saith my text) *They shall not abide in the Lords Land.* Now from all these Titles we are not only to take notice of this:
That

That it ſhould be a great Judgment of God to drive them out of ſuch a good Land.

And obſerve, *It is a great judgment of God, for God through the ſins of a people, to drive them out of a good Land.* Truly ſome times, I ſuppoſe when you travel abroad where there are fair proſpects, you cannot but have ſuch a meditation, Oh! how vile are the ſins of this Land, that ſhould provoke God to caſt us out of ſuch a good Land as this is? And moſt of the Titles, though not all, they may be given to our Land that was given to the Land of *Canaan*; and certainly if God ſhould proceed in his wrath to caſt us out, it would be a heavy judgment to conſider of, *They laid the pleaſant Land deſolate.* Howſoever wicked men may cry out of Gods ſervants that they are the cauſe of the trouble of the Land, yet certainly it is the wicked and ungodly that are falſe in the Worſhip of God, they are wicked men that lay the Land deſolate. Alſo we might here obſerve that, To be caſt out of thoſe mercies that God by an extraordinary providence hath brought to us, is a ſore and a grievous evil.

But now the main end that I name all theſe Epithites, it is this: *To ſhew unto you, the Excellency of the ſtate of the Church of God.* The Reſt of *Canaan* was a type of the Reſt that God hath in his Church, and all thoſe that are Members of the true Church of God they have a ſhare in it, to rejoyce in; to enjoy God in his Ordinances, it is to enjoy that which is typified by all this.

Thou who art a Beleever, haſt a good Land, the Garden of Eden, a glorious Land, and that Land which is the glory of all Lands, there are abundance of excellent privileges that do belong to the Church of God; and as it is a judgment to be caſt out of ſuch a Land as this was, ſo it ſets out the great judgment to be caſt out from the Church of God, or for God to deny to give unto us the bleſſing of his Church; you know what a great affliction it was to *Moses* to think that he ſhould not come into that good Land, Oh!

how

Obſer.

England
another
Canaan.

Corruptors
of Gods
worſhip the
ruin of the
Land.

Obſer.

Uſe. 1.
The happi-
neſs of Be-
leevers.

Uſe. 2.

how did he pray to God that he might come into *Canaan*? Certainly it is that which we should pray for, that we might live to come into *Canaan* that God is a bringing his People into : now let us not murmur as they did in the Wilderness, and their carcases did fall in it, but let us go on and be as *Caleb* and *Joshua*, of another spirit, and not fear our Adversaries, but go on in Gods way, and the Lord will bring us into the good Land ; it's true, we have deserved to be cut off in the wilderness, but certainly God hath a *Canaan* for his People, a *Canaan* yet to come for his People, the Lord hath great things to do for his Church, and there are many expressions upon which some think that God even will make use of this *Canaan* yet for to be the place of his chief Majestic and glory that shall appear in this world ; but however that be, yet the Lord hath a *Canaan* for his people that we may confide in. It follows.

But they shall Return to Egypt, and they shall eat unclean things in Assyria.

For the returning to that we have had before. But besides that, they shall be brought to that poverty and misery to eat unclean poluted bread, whereas before they had abundance: *Peter* would eat nothing that was unclean till God warned him, but the *Assyrians* would bring them unclean meat and bid them eat, they would say, We cannot, this is against our Religion, and against our Consciences. Your Consciences! what do we care for them, eat it or starve, so they were forced to eat. Whence observe,

That it is a great misery to be brought under those men that will have no care, no regard of the consciences of men.

But that which is especially aimed at here, God would take away all notes of distinction between them and the Heathen, this was a means to keep them from mixing with the Heathen, but now saith God, All is gone, let them

go (ſaith God) and eat unclean things, as for the Covenant with me it is wholly aboliſhed, I will own them no more than the very impure Heathen, they would make Leagues with the *Aſſyrians*, wel, they ſhal partake wth them and be filthy and unclean as he; and they deſiled Gods Worſhip by mixing heatheniſh polutions with it, now God gives them up to all Heatheniſh uncleanness, as they were like the Heathens in inward uncleanness, ſo let them be (ſaith God) in outward uncleanness. There is theſe two Notes.

First, *Thoſe that will make Leagues with wicked men, it is juſt with God that afterwards they ſhould come and be intrall'd in all the wickedneſſ and abominations of thoſe wicked men.* They were indeed at a diſtance from them before, but when once the peace is made, they come now to be all one with them. Obſ. 1.

But the main is this, *That, when men are inwardly unclean, God doth not care for their outward cleanneſſ.* Thus many profeſſors of Religion deſiling their conſciences, and becoming like the wicked in inward ſins, at length God leaves them up to themſelves that there ſhould be no difference between them and the wicked in their outward abominations. Have you not known ſome examples in this kind? Obſ. 2.

Laſtly, If it be ſuch a judgment to eat unclean things with the Gentiles, even meat to ſaſiſie thier hunger, Certainly then it is a fearful evil for any of the Saints to partake with ungodly men in unclean wicked worſhip. There might be as much excuſe for this as one could imagin, why Lord (they might ſay) ſhall we ſtarve? True, they might no queſtion eat that which was unclean rather than ſtarve, but yet it was a great miſery that they were in, that they could have nothing to eat but that which was unclean: but now the other is, not only an affliction, but ſin, and indeed the moral of it is to ſhew the great evil that there is in joyning with any way of falſe worſhip; to joyn falſe worſhip it is a great

A a

great evil, and an argument that when God leaves us to this, he disclaims us. *Cyprian* dehorts Christians from communicating with wicked Ministers, from this place: *Ne sibi plebs in hoc blandiator, & cum pro Hoseam Prophetam comminatur & dicat censura Divina, &c.* I do not speak of not joyning in Worship, if there be unclean ones there, Ministers, or People. And I am perswaded if it be thoroughly weighed, there will no body be found to be of that mind; for it is impossible that any Church in the world but in time there will be some that are wicked which will be present: but this is not that that causes many to forbear, (not the presence of wicked men) but find the uncleanness of the Worship, some things that was done actually there, that their consciences told them to be sin.

Secondly, Because they could not do their duty as they should, but if they can have liberty to do their duty, and the Worship be not polluted, I think upon serious consideration there can be no question made: although there should be some that are unclean admitted, yet if there be in the Church any order and government, that the unclean may be cast out, and libertie that every one may discharge his duty, as to go and admonish, and take two or three and then tell the Church, and so to deliver his own soul, no doubt but they may communicate.

VER. 4.

They shall not offer Wine-offerings to the Lord; neither shall they be pleasing unto him.

THE Prophet in the Name of God proceeds to further threatning of Israel; and this in the 4th verse is a very dreadful one: *They shall not offer Wine offerings to the Lord; neither shall they be pleasing unto him.*

Wine and Oyl in sacrifice, what it signified.

In their offerings there was wont to be Wine and Oyl; to note cheerfulness in Gods service: thus in *Numb. 15. 5.* *The fourth part of an Hyn of Wine for a drink offering shalt thou prepare;*

prepare, and for a meat offering thou ſhalt prepare two deals of flour mingled with the third part of an hyn of Oyl. But now al joy ſhal betaken away, there ſhal be nothing but ſadnes and ſinking of ſpirit under their miſery, no Wine offering.

Hence note, That, *those who abuſe their joy to their luſts* Obſ. 1.
when they have it, it's juſt with God it ſhould be taken from them,
that they ſhould have none to give to God though they would never ſo fain.

Secondly, This makes an affliction to be bitter and grievous indeed, *That all joy and comfort in Gods ſervice is gone;* Obſ. 2.
for that's the ſcope, They ſhall offer no Wine offerings, all their joy in the ſervice of God ſhall be gone; they ſhall not only have ſorrow in their outward afflictions that are upon them, but every time they come to think of any ſervice of God their hearts ſhall be dejected, all their joy in the ſervice of God ſhall be taken away: there was a time when ſome of you were wont to offer Wine offerings to the Lord, that is, to have much joy and comfort in the ſervice of God, but is not all gone? where's your Wine offerings to the Lord? you can now perform duties, but your hearts are heavy and dul in the performance of them, there's no ſweetneſs, there's no enlargement of ſpirit in holy duties, all the Worſhip of God is a burden now unto you. Now there is no burden of affliction ſo great a burden as when the duties of Gods Worſhip comes to be a burden. The Saints, ſo long as they have a Wine offering for the Lord in holy duties, ſo long as their ſpirits in holy duties can be free and joyful, their afflictions are not very burdensom, they are well enough, this is more delightful to them than all the Wine in the world, for they can ſay of Gods love, *They love is better than Wine;* ſo they can ſay of their love to God again, *That our love unto him is more comfortable to us than any Wine in the world;* Now though they be in afflictions, their eſtates are gone, that they have no Wine to drink themſelves, yet they have a Wine offering to offer unto the Lord. It's no great matter though we

have not Wine as we were wont to have at our Tables, but when we go to worship God, we have a Wine offering for him at any time; and this makes glad the hearts of the Saints more than the hearts of all the men in the world can be glad when their Corn, and Wine, and Oyl encreases.

They shall offer no Wine offerings; neither shall they be pleasing unto him; they shall not be sweet to him, whatsoever their offerings be. Now that they offer to the Lord, God will take no delight in them, they will be but sower things unto the palate of God, the offerings of the Saints in Gods way they do cheer the very heart of God; And hence is the reason of that phrase that we have, *That Wine doth cheer the heart of God and man*, it cheer'd Gods heart to have offerings offered in a holy manner to him, the greatest joy that God hath in the world is in the offerings of the Saints, which should be the greatest encouragement to them; men by their Wine and good Cheer may make themselves merry, may make their friends merry, but by their holy offerings they do cheer the heart of God, they are as sweet-meats to God, all the Wine and delightful things in the world they are as sweet (I say) to God, as all the Wine and delightful things in the world are for men. Thou hast a cup of Wine for thy friend to cheer him, but hast thou a cup of Wine for God to cheer his heart? that is a gracious holy offering unto God: Surely that which is most sweet to the Soul of God should be most sweet to our souls: You would wonder to hear a man say that he takes as much delight, and he can recreate himself as much in reading, in praying, in hearing Sermons, in holy conference as you can do in all your good cheer, in playing and drinking of Wine in bowls; you think that men are mad to say, that they have as much pleasure in those things, as playing at Cards, and merriment, and musick, and good cheer: you call upon them to play at Cards with you, or be merry, you say to them, why should you be dumpish and

*Judg. 9. 13
enlightened*

*Duties of
Religion, a
Saints re-
creation.*

and never be merry? they tell you again, That they can be as merry and as cheerful in hearing the Word, and praying, and reading, as you in all your playing, and all that that you account delightful. You ſay to them, That they have no recreation. They tell you, That thoſe things that are your burdens, are their recreation; you think it ſtrange. Why ſhould you wonder? Surely that that ſweetens and joyes the heart of God, that muſt needs be the rejoycing of the hearts of thoſe that have the Spirit of God in them; you have joy and mirth in ſuch and ſuch things, theſe are ſweet to you, yea, but do theſe things rejoyce God, are they ſweet to God?

But now, this is the threatning here, *They ſhall not be ſweet now to him*: nothing that is tendered to God from them ſhall be pleaſing to him; no ſaith God, now I will have other waies to glorifie my ſelf in upon you, not by your offerings, I'll rather glorifie my ſelf in your miſeries, and they ſhall be ſweet and delightful to me. If an Hypocrite hath never ſo great enlargements in duties, theſe would not be pleaſing to God, Gods palate is more delicate than to taſt ſuch ſowre and ſapleſs things, than thoſe are that comes from them. Saith *Tertullian*, The Spirit of God is a moſt delicate thing, it hath a delicate palat, and ſuch ſwill that hath ſuch mixtures of filth as your ſervices have, how can they be ſweet to the delicate palat of the Spirit of God? you are Hypocrites, your lives are naught and filthy and unclean, therefore none of your offerings can be ſweet, they are but ſwill unto that palat of mine.

*Delicata
res eſt ſpi-
ritum ſan-
ctus. Terto-*

It follows.

Their ſacrifices ſhall be unto them as the bread of mourners.

The Hebrew may be taken ſubſtantively, or adjectively, as thus: For the *bread of mourning*, or the *bread of mourners*, either of both two may be taken according to the original, Now by the *bread of mourners* is here meant *unclean bread* for;

for so it is interpreted afterwards, *It shall be unclean.*

But why the bread of mourners unclean? This Text hath reference to what you reade in *Numb. 19. 11.* and *14. verses*, you may reade there, that the dead body of a man it did defile whatsoever touch'd it, yea, whatsoever came neer it, and all those that were at Funerals that did mourn for the dead, that came to the place where the dead body was, to mourn with the friends for the dead, they became unclean by the dead body: And that's observable, that the dead body of a beast did not make men so unclean (by legal uncleanness) as the dead body of a man did. The dead body of a beast made one unclean but only till the evening, in *Numb. 11. 31.* but the dead body of a man made a man unclean seven daies. So you shall find in the former chap. of *Numbers*, that they must be seven daies before they could be cleansed; and this was to note: That there were more remarkable expressions of the anger of God upon the sin of man in the dead body of a man, than in the dead body of a beast; one made unclean but till evening, and the other seven daies. But the reason why there was this uncleanness from the dead body, was:

First, To note the uncleanness that there is in sin, in dead works, that those that did meddle with them they were polluted, yea, the uncleanness that there is in coming near unto sinners; the coming but near to them, all that was in the tent was polluted.

Secondly, It was to shew, *how little pleasing to God Funeral mournings are*, for they were made unclean by them: they were made unclean by their Funeral mournings, for this *bread of mourners* is the bread that they eat in their Funerals. The Gentils did mourn for their dead in an inordinate manner, exceedingly; and God would have a difference between his peoples mourning for the dead, and their mourning, because that he would keep up his peoples faith, and the hope of resurrection from the dead, whereas had they had liberty to mourn so excessively as the Heathens

The dead carcass of a beast did not so much defile, as the carcass of a dead man.

Numb.

11. 31.

What this signified.

Why a dead body defiled.

I.

Funeral mournings

Why, if immoderate, nor pleasing to God

thens did, by this means the very faith and hope of reſurrection from the dead might in time even almoſt have been extinguished, therefore God would have them take heed of that, and therefore he did ſo ordain in the Ceremonial Law, that al the mourners for the dead they ſhould be unclean for ſo long a time. As for any that doth give liberty in their natural affections, and doth not hold the reins of them in their mourning for the dead, I would apply to them that Scripture, in Jer. 31. 15, 16. *Thus ſaith the Lord, A voice was heard in Ramah, Lamentation, and bitter weeping, RACHEL weeping for her CHILDREN, reſuſed to be comforted for her children, becauſe they were not. But now, Thus ſaith the Lord, Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears, thy work ſhall be rewarded, and thy children ſhall come back again.* So it followed afterwards. Do not weep as others, let us not mourn as others that have no hope, remember that the mourners for the dead in the Law they were to be unclean for ſeven daies.

Why they were to be ſo long unclean that mourned for the dead.

Thirdly, it was to note this, *That God would have cheerefulneſſ in his ſervice*, and therefore the bread of mourners is accounted polluted. *Levit. 10. 19.* we reade of Aaron when there was ſuch an occaſion of mourning as ever was (almoſt) for a man, for the death of his children that were ſo eminent in office, and were deſtroyed ſo with ſuch a viſible hand of God (*fire from Heaven*) when *Moses* was angry that the Priests had not eat of the ſin offering, ſaith Aaron, *If I had eaten of the ſin offering to day, ſhould it have been accepted? It would have been but as the bread of mourners.* I that have bin ſtruck this day, and am in ſuch a dreadful condition, Would God have regarded the ſin offering? God required joy in his ſervices in *Deut. 12. 7. 18. verſes*, and hence that profeſſion was required in *Deut. 26. 13, 14. verſes*, *Then thou ſhalt ſay before the Lord thy God, I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine houſe, and alſo have given them unto the Levite, and unto the Stranger, to the Fatherleſſ, and to the Widow, according to all the Commandements which thou haſt*

3.

Levit. 10. 19.

enlightened

Deut. 12. 7. 18. Chap. 26. 13, 14.

comms. 12.

illustrated. commanded me, I have not transgressed thy Commandments, neither have I forgotten them. And then in the 14. vers. I have not eaten thereof in my mourning &c.

They were to profess this to God, That they had not eaten thereof in their mourning; this was to shew, that sacrifices offered with a sinking heart in sorrow, is not pleasing to God, God loves a cheerful giver. We must not pine away in our iniquities, fullness and dumpishness even in sorrow for sin it sowres our spirits and services, and makes them unacceptable to God; (I say) a sullen, dumpishness of spirit, though it be in sorrow for sin, it sowres our spirits and makes our services unacceptable to God. There is a groaning and a sighing one to another, or rather, against one another: that is condemn'd in Scripture in Jam. 5. 9. the words in your books are thus, *Grudge not one against another, but in the Original, Sigh not, or groan not one against another; you shall have many that in company with others have a pensive dumpish spirit, sighing and groaning, and making their society to be burdensome to others. Saith the holy Ghost, do not sigh and groan one unto another, there is a sullen dumpish sighing of spirit and dejection of soul that is as unpleasing to God as it is unto men, it pollutes the heart, and pollutes duty.*

*Jam. 5. 9.
μη στενα-
ζετε κατ
αλληλων.*

*A cheerful
spirit in
company.*

But (you will say) *Is all mourning forbidden? that here the holy Ghost should say, Their offerings should be as the bread of Mourners. Christ saith, blessed are the Mourners, and the Sacrifice of God is a contrite heart.*

It's true, an evangelical sorrow is accepted, but that hath sweetness in it, it is not bitter, that's not a dejected spirit, it's not a mourning that causes dejection or fullness, or straightness of spirit, but that mourning doth enlarge the heart and makes it active for God; hence in Ezra. 9. 5. although we read before that Ezra was astonished at the sin of the people, yet saith he, at the 5. verse, *I arose from my heaviness at the evening sacrifice, when the time came that I should sacrifice unto God my heaviness did not hinder*

Ezra. 9. 5.

der me in holy duties. But how many are there that ſink down in their heavineſs, and when God calls upon them for any duty, they cannot ariſe, they are ſo over-burdened with heavy ſpirits? There they ſink down in a ſullen way, and ſhall God accept of ſuch a ſervice as this is? You may pleaſe your ſelves in it and think it is humiliation, but there may be much pride in dejection; there is none ſo proud a ſpirit as the Devil is, and yet no ſpirit ſo dejected as the Devil is. Lead we know it melts ſoonest, but it conſumes in the melting: and many times there may be ſuch a ſpirit that may be ready to ſorrow upon any occaſion, and to melt, but it's ſuch a melting as conſumes the ſtrength of it that it is unfit for any ſervice that God calls for, now ſuch ſervices as you in ſuch a mourning way tender up to God are not accepted of him, Remember this text, *Their offering ſhall be as the bread of mourning.*

*much pride
oftimes in
dejection.
as in Satan*

ſimile.

Gualter hath a Note from this: God would not accept of the offering of Mourners, they were unclean, yet (ſaith he) there are many that ſeek to get their greateſt gain from Funeral mournings, and fall off enveighing againſt them that get gain that way; as their Priests and Officers that uſe to tend upon Funerals for gain, he calls them Vulturs and Crows that do flock to dead bodies, and *Sepulchers Dogs*, (thoſe are his words) that ſeek to get advantage by Funerals. And we know heretofore what abundance of advantage there was gotten by Funerals, ſcarce could you bury a child under three or four pounds, ſuch kind of fees there were, and made them even rejoyce when others did mourn, and getting a great part of of their livelihood from the bread of Mourners.

*The gain
of funerals
formerly,
made ſome
rejoyce,
whē others
mourned.*

And Theophylact hath another Note from this place, *The bread of Mourners.* That is, thoſe things offered to God gotten by oppreſſion, as thus; ſuppoſe a man or woman gets an eſtate, and gets it in an oppreſſing way, it may be they are at home and merry, but it may be the poor children or widdow is mourning for thoſe morſels that thou

Theophylact. in loc.

art rejoycing in, but it is the first Note that is the most according to the mind of the holy Ghost, the mourning that hath respect to the funerals, and so especially at the dejection of spirit in holy duties. It follows,

Expof. I.

The bread for their soul shall not come into the House of the Lord.

Mal. I. 7.

The bread for their soul.] That is; When they are seeking God even for their very lives. By *Bread*, is to be understood, their oblations more generally, not only *Bread*, but their *Oblations*, As *Malac. I. 7.* *Ye offer polluted bread upon mine Altar*: it's taken generally for all kind of offerings upon Gods Altar. So, *The bread for their souls*, that is, those offerings that they did offer for their very lives.

Obferv.

Now from thence the Note is this: *That it's a sad thing when a creature would seek to God for his very life, yet then God rejects him and his offering too.* Before these people they did reject the voice of the Lord at the Temple, and they kept others from going to the House of the Lord, they thought sacrifices elsewhere would serve the turn as well; but now they shall be far enough from bringing any sacrifices to the House of the Lord though they should desire to do it for their very souls. Thus many who in the time of their prosperity do neglect the Worship of God and slight it, and think there is no great matter in it, but afterwards when they see their very lives, their souls lie at the mercy of God, then they would fain seek God for their lives, they see they are undone if God be not merciful to them, yet then God rejects them, their offerings then for their souls shall not come into the House of the Lord, that is; will not be accepted of God. When a man is crying for an Alms, but for a piece of bread, to be rejected is something; but when a man is crying for his soul, then to be rejected, and by God himself, this is more grievous.

Applicat.

Secondly, *The bread for their soul*, that is, The bread they have

have to maintain their lives withal, if they would offer that to the Lord, it ſhould not come into the houſe of the Lord to be accepted; for by *bread for their ſouls*, may be meant, the bread that they have to maintain their lives, for ſo we find the Scripture calls the ſoul, the life of a man, in *Mat. 6. 24.* *Is not the life more worth than meat?* the words in the original are, *Is not the Soul of man?* It is here the bread for the ſoul, that is, the very bread that they have to maintain their lives, their neceſſary bread that they have to live on; although they ſhould be willing to offer that to the Lord, it ſhall not come unto him. Now this is as if the Prophet ſhould ſay to them, Now you cannot be brought to them to offer your ſuperfluity to God, but your condition ſhall be ſuch as if you would offer the neceſſary bread you have to preſerve your lives, if you would offer that to God, God will not accept of it: As if a man were ſo poor that he were ready to ſtarve, and yet for all that ſuch a man would ſay, *Wel, though I ſtarve, yet I wil offer this I have to live on, and I would offer this to God rather than have it my ſelf*, now you would think this ſhould be an argument of a great deal of devotion. But the caſe ſhall be now, that though you would ſeek God with ſuch earneſtneſs, yet the heart of God ſhall be ſo hardened againſt you as they will not be accepted.

*Soul put
for Life.
Mat. 6.
24.
ψυχή.*

Expof. 2.

Thoſe who in time of proſperity are loth to deny their eaſe, and loth to lay out any thing of their ſuperfluity for God, but time may come that though they ſhould be willing to bite off their very nails, and pluck out their eyes, and tear their very fleſh in indignation for their ſin in reſpect unto God any way, yet this God ſhall not vouchſafe to have regard unto. Therefore this learn by it, to ſeek God while he may be found, and not to ſtand upon your own terms with God in the day of your proſperity, and to ſay, *I cannot ſpare this and that for him; but if we deny God now what is his due, though we would give to him hereafter that that our lives lay upon, yet it ſhall not be accepted.*

Obſer.

Uſe.

Expos. 3. 3. *Bread for their souls*: that is, they shall have no more bread than will serve for their very life from hand to mouth, they shall have nothing to bring to the House of the Lord, they shall be so put to it, when they are in captivity, they shall be kept so strictly, as to have nothing but bread and water, nothing but from hand to mouth; they shall be far enough from having any thing to offer to the Lord, to be accepted of him; if they should think of bringing any thing to the House of the Lord, alas! what have they? nothing but a little bread for their soul.

Obler. From whence the Note is this, *To have no estate to offer to God in his service, in the waies of his publick worship is a great affliction.* It follows.

VER. 5.

What will ye do in the solemn day, and in the day of the feast of the Lord?

Explic. I. **N**OW they shall remember their solemn daies, their feasts, and see themselves cut off from any further enjoying of them, it must needs be a great sadning unto their spirits to think what daies once they had, Oh what solemn times and feasts that they did keep to God; for any to sit down in times of affliction and say, I remember what daies of joy in the service of God I once had, but now they are gone, Oh! the daies that I was wont to have, how sweet were they? but all is now past and we must sit down in sorrow and affliction. There was a time (saith God by the Prophet) that you would not suffer any to go up to the feast, but now you shall be far enough from Jerusalem or any other place of Worship, and the very remembrance of those solemn daies shall be grievous to you, *Oh! what will you do in those solemn daies?* Those solemn daies were daies of joy, in Numb. 10. 10. Thus I think some carry it, they make those feasts to be the feasts that they should have gone

gone up to *Jerusalem* in; but I take not this to be the ſcope of the holy Ghoſt here, but rather thus; by the ſolemn Daies and Feaſts of the Lord is here meant, the ſolemn day of Gods wrath and vengeance upon them; now for the making out of that I ſhall ſhew firſt, that in Scripture the day of Gods wrath is call'd the ſolemn day, and the day of Gods feaſt is the day of his wrath, a day wherein God feaſts.

Explic. 2.

First, The ſolemn day it is the day of Gods wrath, in *Lament. 2. 22. Thou haſt call'd as in a ſolemn day, my terrors round about, ſo that in the day of the Lords Anger none eſcaped.* So that the ſolemn day is the day of the Lords anger there.

Lam. 2. 22

And Secondly, The day of Gods Feaſt, that time when God doth execute his wrath upon wicked men is the day of a feaſt to God. In *Revel. 19. 17, 18. verſes*, (beſides other texts) *An Angel cried with a loud voice to all the fowls that fly in the Heavens, Come, and gather your ſelves together to the ſupper of the great God, that ye may eat the fleſh of Kings, and the fleſh of Captains, and the fleſh of Mighty men, and the fleſh of Horſes, and of them that ſit on them, and the fleſh of all men both free and bond, both ſmal and great: it is the day of the Lords feaſt.* Now 'tis a ſolemn day, a day of the execution of Gods wrath, becauſe now God executes wrath publickly and brings much wrath together. *Thou haſt call'd as in a ſolemn day my terrors round about.* You know that in the day of a petty Sessions there may be ſome juſtice done, but more privatly: But in a day of ſolemn Affizes, when there is a full Goal delivery, then judgment is done publickly; ſo God executes juſtice ſometimes upon men particularly, but God hath his ſolemn day to execute his judgments publickly before all, and then the Lord feaſts.

Revel. 12.
17, 18.Why ſo
called.

The day of execution of Gods wrath upon wicked men is a day of feaſt, upon this ground.

Why a day
of Feaſt to
God.

First, Becauſe the day of their feaſts were daies of ſlaying ſacrifices, ſo they ſhould now be ſlain, and God would account even their bodies that were ſlain to be as ſacrifices
for

I,

for this great feast of his, In Isa 34. 6. *The Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the Land of Idumea.* And in Zeph. 1. 7. *The day of the Lord is at hand, the Lord hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests. And then it shall come to pass in the day of the Lords sacrifice, that I will punish the Princes, and the Kings Children &c. He hath bid his guests; so here's the feast of God, and the slaughter of great men are here, the dishes as it were of sacrifice that God would have at this his feast, the Executioners of Gods wrath are now his Priests to kill his sacrifices. Soldiers and Executioners they are turned the Priests of God for to kill his sacrifice for this his feast. Hence in Jer. 6. 4. *Prepare ye War against her, it is in the Original, Sanctifie the War; and in another Scripture, those that were the executioners of Gods wrath, were call'd Gods Sanctified ones.**

Souldiers
Gods
Priests.
Jer. 6. 4.

קדש
ליום
מלחמה
:הוא
Sanctifica-
te super
eā bellum.

אח

Gods
wrath why
called
Wine.
Ps. 75. 8.
Rev. 14. 10
Explic.
Deut. 28.
63.
Ezek. 5.
13.

And then further, A day of Feasting is, a day of Rejoycing; this day of the execution of Gods wrath upon sinners, especially great sinners that do escape mens hands, it is a day of Rejoycing to God, as in a day of Feast: And this word that is translated Feast, it signifies Dancing, it is a day wherein the Lords heart doth as it were leap within him because of joy, God rejoyces in the execution of his righteous judgments upon them; therefore Gods wrath in Scripture is call'd Wine, They shall drink of the Wine of his wrath; the Lord at length when sinners continue impenitent is as much delighted in the execution of his Justice, as men can be in drinking of Wine. In Deut. 28. 63. *As the Lord rejoyced over you to do you good, so the Lord will rejoyce over you for evil.* And in Ezek. 5. 13. *Thus shall mine anger be accomplished, and I will cause my fury to rest upon them, and I will be comforted.* (It's a very strange expression.) Oh! let us, my Brethren, take heed how we rejoyce in sin, God may rejoyce in the execution of his Judgments upon us due to our sin. Men have their daies in joy and mirth in sin; and God hath his daies of joy and mirth in the execution of his wrath; Oh! how sad is the condition of a creature

creature when the infinite merciful God ſhall rejoyce in his ruin ! Surely then, if God doth ſo rejoyce in the execution of his wrath upon wicked men, then the Saints alſo may rejoyce; in *Pſal. 58. 10. The righteous ſhall rejoyce when he ſeeth the vengeance, he ſhall waſh his feet in the blood of the wicked*: Taken from the cuſtom of thoſe Countries, that were wont after their travels to waſh their feet with cold water, and that did reſeſh them: ſo the blood of the wicked ſhould be reſreſhment to the righteous. Now this is not an inſulting joy over them, but rejoycing in the honor that God hath, and in the good that doth come to the Church by the execution of ſuch men, both unto God and to his people. So that it follows in *Pſal. 58. 11. Verily there is a reward for the righteous; verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth.* The Saints may look upon wicked men when they ſee them executed and pittie them as men; but they may rejoyce in this, becauſe they ſee ſuch a ſpectacle before them as makes this Scripture to be good, Verily there a reward for the righteous; verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth. And in *Pſal. 52. 6. The Righteous ſhall ſee, and fear, and laugh*: Mark, though he may rejoyce, yet he muſt have fear mixed with it, he ſhall ſee, and fear, and laugh. And note, that Scripture is ſpoken of a great Courtier, of *Doeg*, one that was a moſt deſperate enemy to Gods people, one that watch'd all the waies he could to do miſchief, and eſpecially to do miſchief to *David*, and he was the man that came and ſtir'd up the King againſt *David*, this 52. *Pſalm*, is made concerning this *Doeg*, and a Propheſie of his deſtruction, ſaith the Spirit of God, *The Righteous ſhall ſee, and fear, and laugh*: If a man can keep his heart ſpiritual, ſanctifying Gods Name in the beholding ſuch an object, thoſe that are eminent wicked men brought to execution, he may Lawfully according to the mind of God, feaſt his eyes in the beholding of it, ſuch a day is call'd the Feaſt of the Lord. And the Lord doth not uſe to feaſt himſelf, but he calls

the Saints rejoyce in Gods vengeance.

Pſ. 58. 10 illustrated

Yet not an inſulting joy.

Pſ. 58. 11

but joyed with pity.

And mixt with fear. Pſa. 52. 6.

Note.

his

Prov. 11.
10.

his Saints to feast with him; in Prov. 11. 10. *When it goeth well with the righteous, the City rejoiceth, and when the wicked perish there is shouting.* And this is according to Gods mind it should be so. And therefore Christians above all men should be far from a proud insulting even over these men, but yet when God laies an object before them wherein they may see the answer of so many prayers, and the fruit of the cries of so many thousands that were oppressed, yea, of so many thousand conscience-oppressed ones, that have cried against such a one, if at the stroke of God, they with hearts lift up to him shall give a shout that shall come up to the Heavens, this pleases God, and the holy Angels, and it is musick fit for the day of the feast of the Lord; thus the Saints may do in the day of the feast of the Lord.

Judg. 5.
1st.

Expos.
[You]

Yea, but saith the holy Ghost here by the Prophet, *But what will you do?* the Saints may do thus when God makes this his feast in the execution of such eminent wicked men, he calls you to it, to rejoyce and bless his Name, he bids you look here and see, is it not good waiting upon me? the Saints may do so and bless God, *But what will YOU do in the day of the feast of the Lord?* What will wicked men do in that day? what will become of all your jolity? what will become of all your stoutness, and wilfulness, of all your pride, of all your scorning, of all your vain hopes, when this solemn day comes, and when the feast of the Lord comes? In Isa. 10. 3. we have a Scripture paralel to this, *What will you do in the day of visitation? what will you do, and to whom will you fly for help, and where will you leave your glory?* Can you tell what in the world to do? You can tell what to do now, you have your wills, and pride it, and stout it out now, but what will you do in the day of visitation, when Gods solemn day and this feast comes? Oh! what can they do but as the great and mighty men, Revelations 6. they cry to the hills to fall upon them, and to the mountains to cover them, for the great day of the Lambes wrath is come. Those that are the most bold and presumptuous

Isa. 10. 3.

Presumptuous in their ſins, when this day of the Lord comes they ſhall be in the moſt miſerable perplexity not knowing what to do, they know not how to bear that which is upon them, nor how to avoid it, nor what courſe to take, what can you do in ſuch a day?

The perplexity of wicked men in the Lords day.

For,

First, All your comforts they are gone, all ſuch things that your hearts cloſed withal and made as Gods to your ſelves, they are gone.

1.

Secondly, Now God himſelf fights againſt you, in *Iſa.* 13. 6. *How! ye, for the day of the Lord is at hand, it ſhall come as a deſtruction from the Almighty.* But it may be you look only upon ſuch and ſuch men that are the Inſtruments. No, but it is a deſtruction from the Almighty, and therefore what can you do?

Iſa. 13. 6.

illustrated.

Thirdly, Conſcience in that day that will terrifie you.

3.

Fourthly, You ſhall not know whither to go for help: To the creature, that cannot help you, your vain hopes in the creature hath the very heartſtrings of them broke, you thought that you might ſhift and help your ſelves there, but now you ſee there is no help there.

4.

What then? you cannot go to God, then the very thoughts of God muſt needs be terrible to you, and then what will you do?

5.

Further, For theſe miſeries they are but the beginning of ſorrows, this day of the Lord it is but a preparation for another day; there is yet a more ſolemn day of the Lord in coming than this preſent. Oh! *what will ye do in the day of the Lord?* Howſoever a man may reſolve to ſet a good face upon a thing; Oh! but my Brethren, though you cannot ſee daunting in a countenance, yet did you but ſee, the black boſom, and the woful guilty ſpirit that there is by ſin within, you would know that they could not in the world tell what do do in the day of the Lord.

6.

It's ſtrange what a man may do even before death, in the preſence

Some put a good face on it even at death, whoſe ſouls yet are full of terror.

presence of men, although his own conscience tells him quite otherwise, and though men are ready to be taken with dying mens expressions, yet many times there is much deceit in them.

Why you will say? *What a man doth profess when he is ready to die, certainly it must needs be a truth.*

There is a notable story concerning this that Bishop Latimer hath, in one of his Sermons, he tells of the desperate stoutness of a certain mans heart even when he was to die: as he was riding he comes to a place where the execution of a man was to be, he turns aside, and when the people saw him they made way, and he comes to speak with the man, and both he and all that were about him could not get out of him to give glory to God for the guiltiness of the fact for which he was to be executed, but stood out in it, that he was not guilty; and when they could get nothing out of him they turned the ladder, and the rope being cut and he down, they thought the life had been gone from him, but at length they saw a little motion in him, and by rubbing and chafing of him they got life, so as he was able to speak, and then he confessed all; that he was guilty of those very things that he had took upon his death that he was not. Thus it's possible for men in the stoutness of their hearts even at the last rather to venture their souls upon it; and well may they that ventur'd their souls so much before upon other things, think that they may make bold with God at such a time as this is. But howsoever there is much dejection of spirit, and they know not in the world what to do. Well, it's happy for us to consider what we do, and to lay to heart what we have done, that so in such a day of the Lord as this, we may know what to do; the Servants of God who have walked conscionably before him, they know what to do in the day of publick calamity.

For first, They can bless God that ever they knew him, that ever they knew his waies, that ever he put it into their hearts to fear his name.

Secondly,

[See King
Jame's
Declarati^o
upon the
execution
of Sir W.
Raleigh.

A notable
story of B.
Latimers

Secondly, They know what to do in a day of calamity, they can exerciſe their faith upon that Word in which the Lord hath cauſed them to truſt, they can make it to be the ſupport of their ſouls, and the joy of their hearts, even in ſuch a day.

Thirdly, They know what to do, they can ſanctifie God Name in his righteous judgments, they can ſee mercy and the love of a Father in the ſoreſt and heavielt afflictions that do befall them.

Fourthly, They know what to do; they can eaſe their ſouls by powring them forth into the boſom of a gracious and reconciled Father.

Fifthly, They know what to do; they can ſee beyond all theſe preſent evils, they can ſee Immortality and Glory, they can ſee that on the other ſide a little beyond theſe troubles and afflictions, there is an everlaſting joy and day of peace coming to them. A *Job* can tell what to do, he can profeſs that though God kill him he would truſt in him. A *David* can tell what to do; *In the multitude of the ſorrows that I had in my heart, thy conſolations reſreſh my ſoul.* *Job, 13. 15*
E Chap. 19. 25.
 A *Habacuk* can tell what to do, *Although the fig-tree ſhould not bloſſom, nor fruit be in the vines, the labor of the Olive ſhall fail, and the fields ſhall yeeld no meat, the ſtalls ſhall be cut off from the fold, and there ſhall be no heard in the ſtalls: yet will I rejoyce in the Lord; yet will I joy in the God of my ſalvation: Thus you ſee the Saints they know what to do in ſuch a day; and this is the excellency of grace, that it can never be put ſo to it, in any ſtrait, but it can tel what to do; as David ſaid to Achish in 2 Sam. 28. 2. Surely thou ſhalt know what thy ſervant can do.* *Pſal. 119.*
Hab. 3. 17
 So the Saints in time of common diſtreſſes they ſhould ſet their graces ſo on work that all may ſee what their faith, and humility, and patience can do, that they may be able to ſay, well, you ſhall ſee now what the Servant of the Lord can do: If one ſhould ſay to one that hath made profeſſion of Godlineſs, You ſpake much of the excellency of grace, but what can you do with it? The
A queſt. 20
a Profeſſor
 Cc 2 answer

The Answer.

answer that such a one may well give, is this: When you cannot tell what to do in the world nor which way to turn your selves, yet through Gods mercy I can tell what to do. Grace will be able to carry a man through fire and water, that faith of mine, and the grace that I have gotten by the Word, that you can scorn at, it's that doth through Gods mercy enable my soul to rejoyce, yea, to triumph in Tribulations, Can you do that? You can rejoyce now when you are in a Tavern, but in the day of Tribulation, when a dismal day shall come to the world, what will you do then? I thank God I have that that can rejoyce my heart in such a day as this is; and that that I have gotten by the Word, and by prayer, and by the Ordinances, can enable me to do that that you cannot do; that's something, that when a man in times of Tribulation can carry himself above all, so that men or devils are not able to put him in such a case as he cannot tell what to do. It follows.

VER. 6.

For lo, they are gone, because of destruction.

But do you say to us, What will we do in such a day? Why, we know well enough what to do, we have a way to help us; if all your threatnings should befall us, yet we can have help: why, 'tis not like that all this misery and disolation that you prophesie of, it's not like that it will come suddenly; then surely we know what to do, we will get to *Egypt*, that's not far off; and if we cannot live here in our own Country, we will go to *Memphis*, that's a brave City and there we may live well enough; Many of us are Merchants, and *Memphis* is as great a place for Mercandize as where we live, and we will get thither.

Obf. 1.

Thus carnal hearts have alwaies some shifting thoughts and some plots in their heads thinking of waies to provide for themselves, and indeed it's this that takes off the hearts of men from humbling themselves before the Lord and making

king their peace with him, becauſe they think they may ſhift off Gods ſtrokes thus and thus, therefore they do not fall down with trembling hearts before the Lord, and cry unto him, *Lord, what wilt thou have us to do?* but they know what to do themſelves; and were it not for this, that their hearts were thus taken off by ſhifts, Oh! what humiliation would there be then before the Lord, what ſubjecting to him, what ſeeking of him? *Iſa. 57. 10. Thou art wearied in the greatneſſ of thy way; yet ſaideſt thou not, There is no hope: thou haſt found the life of thine hand, therefore thou waſt not grieved. Thou thoughteſt thou couldſt tell what to do, therefore thou wert not grieved. When God doth intend mercy to men, he takes them off from their vain hopes, from all their ſhifting reasonings, and then mercy is at hand. When the hearts of men are brought to this, to cry, Men and Brethren, what ſhall we do? and as Jehoshaphat, We know not what to do: but our eyes are towards thee: I ſay, when mens hearts are taken off from all their ſhifts, and they come to this paſs; As for any thing in our ſelves we know not what to do, but only our eyes are towards thee; then is mercy at hand, and never till then. And therefore all the time that you are reasoning thus in your own imaginations, all that while you are far from mercy.*

This hardens them.

Iſa. 57. 10

For to, they are gone to Egypt, becauſe of deſtruction.

The Prophet ſpeaks here of a thing as if it were done already. Although they were in *Samaria*, and in the Cities of *Iſrael*, yet ſaith the Prophet, *Lo, they are gone to Egypt: the wrath of God was too hot for them in their own Country, and away they are gone and got to Egypt for a refuge.*

Carnal hearts in ſtraits will rather make any thing to be their refuge than God. And my brethren, juſt theſe for all the world have been (I fear) and it may be yet are the thoughts of many among us; Why, (think they) Miniſters of God
they

Obſ. 2.

*Applied to
England.*

*We should
think of
helping our
own Nati-
on, rather
than of
flying.*

*When a
man may
fly.*

*Memphis.
Grand-
Caer.*

*The Pyra-
mides
there.*

they threaten Judgment, that God hath a controversie against us, and we see now some tokens of Gods wrath upon us; Well, let the worst come that can, we hope to shift some way or other, we may get into *Holland*, or *Germany*, or *France*, or *New-England*, if the worst come that can, I hope we may have time enough to get one way or other to make shift to live; and these back-doors that their eyes are upon, have made them less solicitous about, and less helpful in the great things that God calls all with a loud voice to joyn together with all their strength, that they may deliver their own Land from that heave wrath that hangs over you. Well, notwithstanding mens thoughts are for shifting, it will prove that all will be vain. Saith God, You think to shift to this place and the other, you may be disappointed, for *Egypt* shall gather you, and *Memphis* shall bury you, my wrath and sore displeasure shall pursue you thither. It's a vain thing for men to seek to fly from the presence of God: But certainly in some cases a man may fly from danger: As in regard of mens Relations and Stations, they see that their work is done in one place, and God by providence opens them a door to another, though not out of distrust, but if when God calls for further work here and there is no door opened by providence, but what's broken open by themselves out of a distrust and slavish fear only to provide for the flesh, I say, such may expect wrath to pursue them wheresoever they go, their safest places may prove to be their graves, *Egypt* shall gather them, (that is taken from the gathering of dead bodies) *Memphis* shall bury them: *Memphis* was a principal city in *Egypt* that now is known by the name of *Grand Caer*, your Merchants and Marriners they know that City that here the holy Ghost speaks of by that name; and then it was call'd *Memphis* upon the name as some think of one of the King of *Egypt*s Daughters. A City very famous in *Egypt* for the *Pyramides* and the Kings Sepulchres that were there, and the City that stood very commodious for traffick because

because it ſtood upon the River *Nilus* and there was multitudes of ſtreets, I am loth to name you the number for indeed it is incredible, only this thing is remarkable that generally all the ſtreets had at each end of them two gates ſo that they might be lockt up as a Tower; and it may be the holy Gholt may allude the rather to that, in ſaying, *Memphis* ſhall bury you, becauſe every place was ſhut up, and it's the ſame City that you reade of in the 19. of *Iſaiah*.

The number of the ſtreets.

Now ſay they, We will go to *Memphis* a brave place for traffick, and a very commodious City, a very ſafe City that hath all the ſtreets like ſo many Towers and we will go and help our ſelves there. Yea, but *Memphis* ſhall bury you ſaith God.

Expof.

From thence the Note is, That it's a great affliction to be forced to leave ones own Country, and never to return again, but to lay our bones in a ſtrange Land. The Lord hath ſent many of his ſervants into other Countries to live among ſtrangers, ſome there are that have gone among ſtrangers, yet through Gods mercy they have not ſo gone but God hath given them libertie to return again, and though their going hath been (as you know) much aſperſed of late, yet when more weighty work may give leave I make no queſtion but you will be fully ſatisfied ſo as you ſhall acknowledge a ſpecial hand of God even in their going. But here ſpecially the Jews did account it a great miſery to die out of their own Land. *Buxtorfius* in his book called the *Jewiſh Synagogue*, relates ſuch a Tradition that the Jews have, They do believe that the Reſurrection at the great day ſhall be at *Jeruſalem* of the Jews, that whereſoever any of the Jews have lived and died, yet they ſhall riſe up at *Jeruſalem*, therefore when many of them that lived a great way off did begin to grow old they would leave their ſtation and go as neer to *Jeruſalem* as they could: for this is their Tradition, that their bodies ſhall come through paſſages of the earth all along to *Jeruſalem*, and that they may prevent the

Obf.3.

See Vindication in Answer to Mr Edwards.

Buxtorf. Synagoga Iudæa.

A Jewiſh tradition.

per meatus terræ.

the

the trouble of coming so far under the ground, therefore they remove their dwelling to dwell neer *Jerusalem*. And this is the vanity of spirit that they are left unto. But though that be a vanitie, yet certainlie it's an affliction to anie to be out of their own Countrie, and there to live and die; but if it be a great evil to flie from ones own Countrie for fear of destruction, and to have the place they fly to be made as their grave, what a great evil is it then for men meerlie out of love for advantage to leave places where before they did or might enjoy communion with the Saints, to leave the Ordinances of God, to go into other places among Papists, and Heathens where they cannot have the freedom of Gods Worship? Now such as these are should find these places to be labyrinths of miserable perplexity to them, it is just with God it should be so, seeing they out of love to gain would thus venture themselves, and therefore let men take heed of this how they go upon any private respects from places where Gods Worship may be had to places where they cannot enjoy it. It follows.

The pleasant places for their Silver, Nettles shall possess them; Thornes shall be in their Tabernacles.

The word that is translated *pleasant places for Silver*, it is, *the desire of their silver*.

First, It may have reference to this, to their furniture of silver, that nettles shall grow where they wear their fine silver things, their fine Cupbords of plate, and household stuff that they did take so much delight in, as in *Lament. 1. 7. Jerusalem remembred in the daies of her affliction, and of her miseries, all her pleasant things that she had in the daies of old.* Mark but these two things from this text, *Jerusalem* in the daies of her affliction and miserie. My Brethren, there may be daies of affliction, and yet no daies of miserie, the Saints may meet with daies of afflictions, but not of misery; the wicked when they meet with daies of affliction, they

מחמך
-כסף
Desideriū
argenti.
Expos. 1.

Lam. 1. 7.

they meet with daies of miſery; but the thing I note that text for is this, They ſhall remember all the pleaſant things that they had. Oh! they ſhall think then, what fine Cupbords of plate they were wont to have, and all their fine things; ſo here, here's a threatning that there ſhould nettles grow in the very place where their fine houſhold ſtuff ſtood, ſuch a place of the houſe where ſuch a fine Cupbord of plate was, all ſhall be ſo demolished that perhaps Nettles and Thorns ſhall grow there.

And then ſecondly, The places where they hid their Silver, as you know in times of War men will hide their Silver, and they think they may come back again and have them, but ſaith God, you ſhall go far enough from them, and I make no queſtion but another Generation may find treaſures of ſilver in the Countries, in the miſt of Nettle buſhes and Thorn buſhes.

Thirdly, It is their delightful houſes adorned with ſilver, that were ſo glorious to their eyes, al now is gone ſaith God, and Nettles and Thorns ſhall grow up, they ſhall *Inherit*, ſo the word is; you hope to leave theſe brave houſes to your children to inherit, but now ſaith God I have other Heirs for your houſes than your children, I have Thorns and Nettles to inherit them, for ſo the word is in the Hebrew, *They ſhall inherit*. It's a lamentable ſpectacle to ſee places where fair buildings have been that now Nettles and Thorns ſhould grow, as it is like to be if theſe Wars hold in divers places of this Kingdom, that was the complaint heretofore of Troy, *There was Corn grew where once Troy was*, it was made a plowed field, but to have Nettles grow it is worſe, for where the plow goes there are inhabitants, but where Nettles and Thorns are that's a deſolate wilderneſs. Travellers tell us, that in manie places of Germany, when they go by where brave buildings were, there's nothing now but buſhes and nettles; the Lord deliver us from ſuch a heavy ſtroke as this is, this is threatned in *Iſa. 32. 13. Upon the Land of my people*

יורשם

Sages eſt,
ubi Troja
fuit.

Germany.

Iſa. 32. 13

ple shall come up bryars and thorns, yea upon all the houses of joy in the joyous City. Would it not be a sad spectacle to see such a City as this to have the buildings overthrown and to have Nettles and thorns in your fairest streets come up? yet sin is such a ruinous thing as this. And then in *Isa. 34.*
13. Thorns shall come up in her Palaces, Nettles and Brambles in the Fortresses thereof, and it shall be a habitation for Dragons, and a Court for Owls; the Owls they shal keep Court there. In our Courts we know what abundance of sin was there, now the Owls shall keep Court there instead of these Courtiers that lived so bravely there formerly. Oh my Brethren! sin is a leprosie that infects the doors of our houses: there's a notable story in *2 King. 25. 9.* it said of *Nebuchadnezzar*, *That he burnt the House of the Lord, and the Kings house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every geat mans house burnt he with fire.* There is a great deal of sin committed in great mens houses, and at this day how have the great men of the Land almost in all places shewed a spirit of Malignity against the work of Reformation, Oh how just with God is it that the houses of these great men should suffer; this that here is threatned in my text, and manie of them have been spoiled already, and if God give them not hearts speedily to see the evil of their waies it's very probable that within a few years this text of mine may be fulfilled upon them,

They shall possess them.

It may be they think though the War did keep us from our houses a while, nay though they should be broken down, yet our Lands will hold, they cannot take away them. Nay saith God, flatter not your selves with thinking to come to it again, for you shall never come to them, for *Nettles and Thorns shall possess it.* And thus we have done with the sixth Verse, but a very little of the seventh Verse. And so,

VER. 7.

The daies of Viſitation are come, the daies of Recompence are come.

And of Recompence.

GOD hath his ſet time for the Execution of Judgment. Obſ. 1.

What good is it to a Malefactor that he is let alone a while in the Priſon, when he knows that at ſuch a day of the Month muſt be the day of his Execution? Admonitiō

The day of Viſitation and Recompence, i.e. of Enquiry for all thy evil. Obſ. 2.

Your Judgments they are none other but, *Recompences*; you may have vain pleas and reaſons to juſtify your ſelves, but when God comes to viſit you he will deal with you in a way of Recompence proportionable to your waies; If you would fall down and acknowledg your ſins and your need of Mercy, then it may be you may find Mercy; but if you will ſtand to juſtify your ſelves, then expect that God when he comes, will come in a way of Recompence.

And now my Brethren, Oh! what a deſperate venture is this, that men will venture to deal with God in a way of Recompence, whenas you may be dealt withal in a way of mercy?

You will ſay, *Who are thoſe that will deal with God in a way of Recompence?*

Certainly thoſe that will plead and juſtify themſelves, and will ſay, God knows I do what I can, and this is not ſo much my fault as others: Then expect that God when he comes to deal with you he will have your pleas to be fully examined, and if it prove that your pleas will hold, you ſhall have accordingly; and if it prove that your pleas

Uſe
To thoſe
that ſay
they do
what they
can.

shall be found false, then you shall be dealt withal in a way of justice. Will you venture? dare any of you venture upon your Pleas to stand it out? if you say, you do what you can, you will be tried by it, and you shall be recompenced accordingly; and if it be found indeed that you do what you can, you shall be saved; but if it be found you have not done what you could, you shall perish eternally: Will you venture? certainly, whatsoever you stand pleading to justify your selves by, you may expect that God will deal with you in a way of Recompence.

The daies of Recompence are come.

Expos.

Twice come: as it is said; *Babylon is fallen, is fallen.* Israel was in a way of Recompence and would hardly be moved with any apprehension of danger, and therefore you have it twice repeated.

From thence the Note is this.

Obs. 3.

That the apprehension of an evil presently coming, that terrifies the soul. You have a notable text for that in Ezek. 7. 6.

Ezek. 7. 6.

An end is come, the end is come; and then in the next words, Behold, it is come again. In one little verse three times, *An end is come, the end is come; behold, it is come.* And in the verse before, *it comes,* and in the verse after, *it is come;* five times God tells them that, *it is come.* Then saith my text,

Israel shall know it.

Obs. 4.

Wicked men will not know till they feel; when they are struck, then they will know. The best knowledg of Gods displeasure it is from the causes, but if men will not know from thence, they shall know from the effects. In their prosperity they had many false Prophets that soothed them up, so, that they were kept from knowledg, but now when they had felt Gods stroke, then they should know; but he doth not tell you what you should know. They should know these things.

First,

First, They ſhould know what a great God it is they have to deal withal.

Secondly, They ſhould know how vile a thing ſin is.

Thirdly, They ſhould know the vanity of all their ſhiftings.

Fourthly, They ſhould know the dreadfulneſs of Divine wrath:

Fifthly, The faithfulneſs of Gods Prophets.

Sixthly, They ſhould know the wiſdom of thoſe who dar'd not do as they did.

Seventhly, They ſhould know the follie and vanitie of all the falſe Prophets that did ſeduce them before; they ſhould know, that the *Prophet is a fool, and the ſpiritual man is mad.* Oh! the knowledg we have of theſe things in time of affliction, is another manner of knowledg than we know in the time of our proſperitie: It was the ſpeech of a German Divine in an affliction, In this diſeaſe I know what ſin is, and how great God is in this diſeaſe. And yet he was a Divine, why did he not know before? No true lie, I never knew what ſin and God was ſo before.

*The ſaying
of a German
Divine.
Se Melchi-
er Adams
de vitæ
Theolog.
Germ.*

Now Iſrael ſhall know.

The knowledg that men have of the truth of God in time of affliction, is a working knowledg. I appeal to you; How manie of you in the time of your ſickneſs and afflictions have known things after another manner than ever you knew them before? It follows;

Obſ. 5

The Prophet is a fool, and the ſpiritual man is mad.

In the time of Affliction they ſhall cry out that thoſe are Obſer.
fools that did ſeduce them. One that died not long ſince by the Exchange, cried out of his keeping companie with lewd Miniſters that did encourage him in his waies, and that did harden him againſt Religion and the Saints of God.

In

In former times we know how men would close with wicked Ministers, and how they would be hardened in scorning at Religion, and Puritans, but these will have cause upon their sick beds, and death beds, to crie out of them, for they would tell them that they need not be so strict and so pure: take heed now how you be deceived by those that account themselves spiritual men, they here in the text upon experience find that the Prophet did but befool them, and those that had such glorious titles of spiritual men, that they were but mad; and if you take not heed some that are here may find it hereafter true upon their death beds, that they may cry out of such and such Ministers that did perswade them to such and such things.

Obser.

But truly tis no excuse to men, though they should be led aside by Ministers and others, for you shall find what's the reason that they were given up to Prophets that were fools, it follows in the text: *For the multitude of their iniquity, and for their great hatred.* Thou hadst a wicked and a vile heart that did hate Gods people and the waies of godliness, and therefore it was just with God to give thee up to those that thou seest now to be fools and mad-men; Oh! it's just with God when mens spirits are against the true Prophets of God, to leave them to Ministers that should cozen and undo their souls everlastingly.

VER. 8.

The watch-man of Ephraim was with my God: but the Prophet is a snare of a fowler in all his waies, and hatred in the House of his God.

IN this, and the former Verse God charges (as the cause of) much evil in *Israel* the false Prophets, but yet through the Peoples sin, for it was through the multitude of their wickedness that they were so guided by those false Prophets, whom they followed in times of their prosperity. But God would have a time wherein they should know they

they were but fools, and the ſpiritual man but mad. And this was likewiſe becauſe of their great hatred, the great hatred of the true Prophets, their ſpirits were againſt them, and therefore God gave them up to thoſe that were falſe: the ſame argument follows here in the eighth verſe, *The watchman of Ephraim was with my God: but the Prophet is a ſnare of a fowler in all his waies, and hatred in the houſe of his God.*

The watch-man.

Such who profeſs themſelves watchmen, that take upon themſelves glorious titles, Prophets and Miniſters of God are called *watchmen*: and theſe made great profeſſion that they would be as careful to foreſee, and labor as much to prevent danger to the People as any of them all, they profeſt to be very uſeful unto the people, and to be as much for God as any, but they were a ſnare; and this title of theirs, and this profeſſion of theirs proved to be a ſnare unto the people. Many vile things are hidden under fair and glorious titles, as many excellent things are diſgraced under baſe and ignominious titles: You know what a deal of evil was lately covered among us by names and titles, as the *Clergie*, and the *Church*; and likewiſe what abundance of good had dirt caſt upon it by titles, as *Conventicles*, and *Puritans*, and the like; and now the titles of things may be changed into others, but may be as dangerous ſome other way, as formerly theſe titles were both one way and the other: Let people for ever take heed of titles and examin what lies under them, be not led away one way nor other, either by fair or ſpecious titles, or by ignominious titles; Ordinarily people that do not examin things to the bottom, they are taken with names and titles. But ſomewhat of theſe heretofore.

Obſ. 1.

The watchman of EPHRAIM.

The people of *Israel*, the ten Tribes they had no mind to the true watchmen, because they threatned hard things against them, they were willing to close with any others that would preach more pleasing things, so they might set one against another, and this quieted them; although the truth was, that these watchmen were a most grievous snare to them.

Expos.

Thus many who have carnal hearts, and are not able to bear the evincing and threatening power of the Word in the mouths of the true watchmen, of faithful Ministers, they seek to help themselves by the opinions & judgments of other Ministers, and so think they are safe when they have the opinion and judgment of some that are learned, and have repute of godliness too, for so certainly these watchmen had here; and then they can set the opinion and judgment of one, against the opinion and judgment of the other, they think they are safe now and may be quiet, yet this proves a dangerous snare.

Obs. 2

When there is cleer conviction of a truth, it is a dangerous thing out of a lothness to yeeld to that, to seek the opinions of others. I confess when a man hath the opinion and judgments, and if out of love to the truth that he might be confirmed in the Truth, or that he might know fully what the Truth is, for him to seek help from others is a good thing; but if out of distast to a Truth, if because the heart is weary of it, and would fain not have it to be true, because it may bring some trouble, upon that ground he goes to seek the opinion of some other, and hopes before he goes that he shall find the opinion of others to be contrary, and so he may have something to quiet his spirit; this is a great snare to the souls of those that have been guilty of it.

The Watch-man of Ephraim: Ephraim had Watch-men as well as Judah.

No

No cauſe ſo ill but will have ſome in the place of Watch men Obſ. 3.
that have the repute of wiſe, learned, and judicious men to maintain it.

The Watch-man of Ephraim was with my God.

They profeſſed more than ordinarie judgment in the knowledge of Gods mind, and acquaintance with the waies of God, and yet they were ſnares to the people. Whence obſerve :

Every man in his erroneous opinion doth pretend to be with God, Obſ. 4.
and for God ; and without this indeed he could never be a ſnare to thoſe that proteſt themſelves to be the people of God.

With my God.

It muſt needs be a great grief to thoſe who have the true know- Obſ. 5.
ledg of God, and indeed have intereſt in him, to ſee others who are falſe to maintain that which is evil ; and yet to pretend to God, as if they were for God, and for the glory of God, and to ſet up God as much as any. The Prophet ſeems to ſpeak in grief and trouble, theſe Watch-men of Ephraim, thoſe among the ten Tribes, they will pretend to be for God, to be for my God.

Varatulus hath a further Note upon this, (ſaith he) Ephraim made to himſelf a Watch-man, and would hear him, and would hear them together with his God, like mad-men would hear them together with God, and ſo they would worſhip Idols and God too, they would ſeem to reſpect the true Prophets and falſe Prophet, both which is a meer madneſs, (thus he.)

Varatulus
Ephraim
fecit ſibi
ſpeculato-
rum, id eſt
pſendopro-
phetas eoſ-
que vult
audire ſi-
mul cum

Deo ſuo, audire & colere tam Idola quam Deum, tam falſos quam veros prophetas que eſt mera infania.

The Watchman of Ephraim was with my God.

Obs. 6. *They would not wholly depart from God, and yet they would maintain false worship, they would mingle both together.*

But then, The Prophet is a snare, a snare of a Fowler.

Expos. That is, he catches poor simple deluded souls as a Fowler catches the bird with casting baits that are pleasing unto the bird, hiding from the bird the snare that presently comes upon it: so saith he, the Watchmen of Ephraim do thus, First they come to the people with very fair and specious things, and labor to drop in those principles, and do not discover what inferences they intend to make of them afterwards, they do not discover what designs they have, and what their scope is, for the present they come to them, and desire them to yeeld to such things that seem to be as fair as any thing in the world, and with much pretence that it is only for their good, and they intend nothing but good, now when they have brought them to yeeld to such things, they know that there are some inferences to be brought from those things that will make them to yeeld to other things, which had they been presented to them at first, they would never have yeelded to, but the inferences lay at a distance as the snare doth, and they not seeing what would follow they are brought to yeeld to such things, that afterwards they cannot tell how in the world to avoid, but they must yeeld to further things: thus the Watchman is as a snare of a Fowler, that laies things that seem to be very plausible at first, but intend afterwards to bring the people to yeeld to other things that would be abhorred if at first they were presented to them.

Applic. Good people, as long as you live take heed of the snares of Watch-men in this kind. God would not have you submit:

ſubmit to any thing, nor do any thing but out of faith.

You muſt underſtand the ground from Scripture, and eſpecially *Obſ. 7.*
in the matters of Gods Worſhip before you yeeld and ſubmit to any
thing, for otherwiſe though things may ſeem to be very
fair at firſt, yet they may prove to be but ſnares before you
are aware. Again

And hatred in the houſe of God.

First, *This Watch-man is an object of Gods hatred, in Gods*
House; wicked Officers in the Church bringing in their
ſuperſtition, and importuning and urging the deluſions of
their own hearts, ſeeking to comply with the times to pre-
ſerve themſelves in credit and eſteem, and enjoyment of
their livings, they are an object of Gods hatred, theſe
were the Watch-men that did comply with the times and
ſought their own ends, they were the object of the hatred
of God; no people in the world whom God doth hate
more than ſuch kind of Watch-men in his Houſe. And
at this day we ſee how God hath caſt ſhame and loathſom-
neſs in the faces of ſuch. They are hatred by way of ex-
clamation: *ô rem odioſamit abominandam domo Dei.* Oh
hideous and abominable thing that ſuch Watch-men
ſhould be pertaining to the Sanctuary.

Obſ. 8.
1.

Or otherwiſe by way of efficiency, *Watchmen are hatred,*
that is, they cauſe hatred, they cauſe my people to hate
the true Prophets, and the Servants of God that would
worſhip God in his own way; and indeed, there are no
men in the world that are ſuch cauſes of the hatred of the
faithful Miniſters of God, the Saints of God, as wicked
Watchmen are, Who are the men that do ſtir up hatred
and perſecution againſt the Saints and People of God in
former times, but evil and wicked Miniſters?

2.

Hated in the houſe of my God.

But now, *Wherein doth the falſe Prophets ſeem to be envigh-* *Queſt.*
ed againſt?

Ans.
Expof. 1.

2 King.
19. 11.
2 Chron.
36. 16.

I find some (and I confefs not without fom probability) underftand all thefe of the true Prophets, and then the fenfe will run thus; You accounted the Prophets of the Lord, who declared the mind of the Lord faithfully to you, to be no other than fools and mad-men, but you fhall know that they were no fools, that they were no mad-men; fo I find in 2 King. 9. 11. *Wherefore came this mad fellow in?* faith the Captain of Jehu, and in 2 Chron. 36. 16. *They mocked the Prophets and Messengers of God.* Here it is thought Ezekiels friends and acquaintance bound him, as thinking him mad, chap. 3. 5. And fo we reade in the Gofpel of Chriffs kins-folks, they laid hands upon him as thinking him to be mad; and fo Paul in 2 Cor. 5. 13. *Whether we be befides our felves, it is to God.* The true Prophets were thought to be as fools and mad-men, and they were fcorned and contemned as thofe that were fpiritual mad-men; but faith the Lord, they fhall know in the time of their vifitation whether they were thus or no: you fhall find by your woful experience that thefe were no fuch mad-men as you thought them to be. And in time of affliction men have more honorable eftcem of the true Prophets of God than at other times, thofe that were jeered at before, Oh! they were fo wife, fo precise and holy, and fuch tender confciences! Now they fhall know how vain their thoughts were of them, when Gods hand is upon fuch men as jeer at the Minifters of God for being fo holy and the like, yet when the hand of God hath been upon them, they have fent for thefe men to pray for them above any men. So we reade of the people of *Antioch*, though many of them did give their hands for the banifhment of *Chryfoftom*, yet being terrified by an Earthquake, immediately fent for him again. And fo in *Job*, 33. 23. fpeaking of the time of affliction, *If there be a messenger with him, an Interpreter one among a thoufand to fhew unto man his uprightness.* But further,

Chryfoftom
Theodore.
lib. 5. cap.
34.

Because of the multitude of thine iniquities, and thy great hatred.

If you underſtand it of the true Prophets, the ſenſe will run thus, You ſhall know in the time of your viſitation, whether they were mad-men and fools or no; it was upon the multitude of your iniquity and great hatred that you accounted them ſo, to be ſuch fools and mad-men before, it was becauſe of the Malignity of your ſpirits and the hatred againſt the right waies of God; you had many exceptions againſt them, but the truth is, you ſaw nothing, but the Malignity of your hearts lay at the bottom, you accounted them fools and mad-men becauſe of the multitude of your iniquities. Men who are not ſo able to judg of things ſometimes in controverſie, yet they may have this rule to help them to judg of Miniſters and of their cauſe, (who they are that are moſt like to be in the truth) by this rule,

What is the ſide that men incline moſt to as they grow moſt in godlineſs? And what ſide men incline moſt unto, as they grow more looſe and formal in their waies?

Conſider of that, If there be a Side or Partie, you are not able to judge which is in the truth; there's ſome good men on one ſide, and ſome of the other; but you being weak and not able to examine the ground of things, take this Rule as a help: What is the Side that men moſt encline to as they grow in godlineſs? And what ſide is that that men moſt cleave to as they grow moſt looſe and moſt formal in their way and profiting? When (I ſay) men whoſe multitude of iniquities encrease, and according to the encrease of the multitude of their iniquities, ſo they encline to a Party; I cannot but be the more ſuſpicious of it, when I ſee the other way that the moſt conſciencious men are, and the more the fear of God prevails in them, and the more ſtrict they grow in their waies, they do more encline

A Rule to help comon people to judge of Miniſters, & of their cauſe.

*A Caution
to the Rule*

encline to another side ; I cannot but think that there may be much of God there. And yet it's true, that the greatest Hereticks that ever have pretended great holiness, that must be granted too. But still, if this opinion were not of God, those that did indeed grow up in true holiness, the more holy they were, the less did they favour that way, though it had never such a pretence of holiness. And if it be but a pretence of holiness and not true, then certainly the more loose and formal professors grow, the more will they close with that way (if it be but a pretence) so it is here, their hearts were taken off from the true Prophets of God through the multitude of their iniquities ; the more they grew to looseness the more were their hearts taken off from the true Prophets of God.

Further : *The watchman of EPHRAIM was with my God.*

Still take it as concerning the true Prophets, that is, Even Ephraim wanted not watchmen to shew them their danger in departing from God ; though the ten Tribes did decline from God, yet such was Gods goodness to them as they had watchmen that were faithful even among them.

They were with my God.

That is, They had such Watch-men as lookt upon God, as having to deal with God and not with men, as sent from God, as pleading for God, and hence they could not be taken off from their way, either by threats or flattery, they might have had preferment as well as others, they needed not have been the But of the hatred and malice of men no more than others, if they would have done as others did. No, but *they were with my God*, the fear of the great God was upon their spirits, and they dared not do as others did, they resolved to be faithful with God, to approve themselves to God, come of it what would

would come they went on in their way, they left their means, and eſtates, and liberties, and lives, and all to God, it was for God to provide for them, it was for them to look to it that they did continue faithful to God. And thus the ſenſe runs, If they were the true Prophets that were among the ten Tribes, then it is as an aggravation of the ſins of the ten Tribes, that though they had many falſe Prophets, yet they had Watch-men that did continue faithful with God.

And with my God.

Thoſe who have intereſt in God they rejoyce when they ſee faithful Miniſters of God keep cloſe to God, to ſet up God in all their waies, when they ſee them not to be ſet upon their own deſigns, not to warp this way or that way, but to make it to be their bent and aim to ſet up God, and to bring men to the knowledg of God, Oh! they rejoyce in this. So the Prophet ſpeakes with a joy, (if it be ſpoken of the true Watchmen) Oh! bleſſed be God that yet notwithstanding all the defection of the times and corruptions that there were, yet that there were Watch-men among Ephraim that were faithful with God, Oh they had no other deſigns but to ſet up God, and were willing to deny themſelves in any thing ſo be it they might bring ſouls to God, thus the Prophet rejoyces.

Obſer.

And certainly it's a great deal of joy for the Saints to ſee Miniſters of God to have clean ſpirits this way, to have no deſigns of their own, but to ſet up the honor of God among people. But even theſe Prophets as faithful as they were, yet they were accounted no other than a Inare of a Fowler, and are even hated in the houſe of their God, they are accuſed of being politick ſubtil men, who have cunning plots and reaches to ſet up their own way, that they are as bad as Jeſuites, and ſuch kind of Aſperſions as theſe are the Devil calls upon them, and gets many good people.

*Asperſion
on good
Minifters.*

*What Sa-
tans great
design is.*

people to drink in theſe things, and thoſe who otherwiſe were accounted Godly and of great uſe in the houſe of their God are now become even hatred in the houſe of their God, the Devil hath ſo prevail'd to beſpatter and aſperſe them with ſuch ſtories about them and reports of them as even theſe men that were the moſt faithful with their God, yet now are lookt upon as the troublers of the times, and as ſnares to people, and are even hatred in the houſe of their God, even by many people that otherwiſe have good affections: no way doth the Devil drive on his own deſigns more efficaciously than by this, Then by making the moſt painful, faithful, zealous Miniſters of God to become even hatred in the houſe of their God, even among good people that are profeſſors of Godlineſs. Thus Jer. 18. 22. *They have digged a pit to take me, and laid ſnares for my feet.* Iſa. 29. 21. *They lay a ſnare for him that reproveth in the gate.*

Further, *Hatred in the Houſe of his God.* (Underſtand it ſtill of the true Prophets) And then the ſenſe further goes thus: Yet he continues in the houſe of his God, here he makes this his encouragement, that he is in the houſe of his God, he is in Gods work though he be hated for it. Gods Miniſters they ſhould not be offended though they find the like dealings among the profeſſors of Religion, yet ſtill they ſhould continue in their work and imployment with all faithfulneſs that God ſets them about, and then all aſperſions will wipe off in time, they will vaniſh and come to nothing.

*Calvin.
in loc.*

Calvin carries the ſenſe of this ſomewhat different from what hath been ſaid, in a middle way between both, and if not according to the full ſcope, yet it comes very neer, thus he takes it; he takes the former part of the verſe for true Prophets, and the latter part of the verſe for the falſe Prophets, as if he ſhould have ſaid thus: There was a time that *Ephraim* had Watchmen with my God, and with his people, they had *Eliſha*, and *Elijah*, but now the Prophet

is a ſnare of a Fowler, and hatred, in the houſe of my God. This is a woful change in places where people have had Watch-men that were godly, wiſe, zealous, faithful with God, but now theſe are gone, they are dead, many of them are baniſhed, and many are with God in Heaven, and they have others now among them, as a juſt Judgment of God who are a ſnare to them, and hatred in the houſe of God, others who do ſucceed theſe bleſſed ſervants of God that are gone, they are like ſtorms, and tempeſts, that do ſucceed fair and Sun-ſhine weather, and if we take it thus for both, the true Prophets in the former part of the verſe, and the falſe Prophets in the other; then there is a ſpecial emphasis in the change of the phraſe [*my God*; and *his God*] the Watch-man with my God, and hatred in the houſe of his God; the God of the true Watch-men, and the God of the falſe Prophets are not the ſame: thoſe who pretend to worſhip God, and yet worſhip him in a falſe way, they worſhip another God, they have not the ſame God; and no mervail though there is hatred between true Prophets and falſe then; they muſt needs have hatred one againſt another who have divers Gods, *My God*, and *His God*, and yet both pretended to be for the ſame God.

Yea, but ſaith the Prophet here, No, whatſoever their pretences are, they teach people the Worſhip of God not in a right way, God is not their God: And who they are that have moſt intereſt in God, let God Himſelf judge; not by giving the one more of the favour of the times than the other; for the falſe Prophets had more of this now: but 1. By the moſt appearing of the Spirit of God in men. 2. By the witneſs of mens conſciences when they are going to appear before God. And 3. By what Chriſt ſhall own at his appearing. Oh! that I could tell how to ſweeten theſe times I ſpeak unto you of. God by providence hath caſt me upon this Scripture. I know not how to give you the mind of God in this Propheſie but by being thus plain.

The watchman of Ephraim was with my God: and their hatred in the house of his God.

Ar. Mon-
tan. in loc.
Dicta est
oratio ex
similitudi-
ne eorum
qui in
magna fa-
miliâ apud
Dominum
plurimum
posse vi-
dentur &c.

Only one Note by the way that *Arias Montanus* hath upon the words, saith he, This Phrase, *Hatred in the house of his God*; it's taken from such men as live in some great families, and seem'd to have a great deal of power with their Lords, and abuse the power they have with their Lord, being continually by his table & bed side, they are a means to cause a great deal of hatred, and at length to undo others and themselves: So these Prophets are just like these men, they are in the house of God, and seem to have much intimacie with God in his House; but the truth is, they abuse this their intimacie to the hurt of themselves and to the hurt of others. And thus much for the Explication of the Eighth Verse. It follows.

VER. 9.

They have deeply corrupted themselves, as in the daies of
G I B E A H.

Obfer.

THeir wickedness hath deeply rooted its self, so the word here signifies; there's little hope to prevail with them, labor what you can, their superstitious and Idolatrous waies have gotten such deep root in their hearts that there is no getting of it out. Sin, and especially that sin of superstition so deeply roots its self in the hearts of men if it be let alone but a little time that there is no getting of it out.

Use.
Englands
reformatio

And indeed there is little hope of the Reformation that is now in hand, that ever we should see it come to the full beauty and perfection of it until even God himself, either by some extraordinary hand of his should root out those superstitious principles that there are in many men, or at least by his own hand root out those that have such super-

stitious

ſtitious and Idolatrous principles rooted in them. We wonder that men cannot be taken off from ſuperſtitious waies, Oh! they are deeply rooted, it's not an eaſie matter to eradicate thoſe waies and vile words of theirs; it's a bleſſed thing to take ſin betimes, and you that are young that have not other wickedneſs, and eſpecially ſuperſtition rooted in you, you are thoſe that it's like God will make uſe of for the bringing this Reformation to perfection, you ſhall ſee the glory of it, it may be when others are gone and dead you ſhall come to ſee what God intended in all theſe ſtirs that have been among us, we find by experience the fruit of this in the hearts of men, what a deal of ſtir was there to take them off at firſt? Oh! but the root abides ſtill in mens hearts, and there's this experiment of it, of the depth and root that ſuperſtition takes in mens hearts, That though men be content not to practice thoſe ſuperſtitious waies that they did before, becauſe now the times do not favor them, yet this we find, that men cannot be brought to leave off thoſe things as ſinful, but as inconvenient, they will be content to forbear the practice of them, but you have but few men, I had almoſt ſaid but few Miniſters, but ſo far I may be bold to ſay, that many Miniſters, but eſpecially thoſe who were any thing forward in ſuperſtitious waies, ſuch as did not before account them a burden, thoſe though they do leave them off at this time, yet not as things that are ſinful, they never could be brought to that, to acknowledg them to be ſinful, and ſo to charge themſelves in ſinning againſt God, but they are content to leave them off as things that are inconvenient and as may be burdensom to other men; but the leaving them off after ſuch a way is no other, but if the times ſhould favor them again there is a principle retained in their hearts, ſo as they would be in readineſs to ſubmit to them again, and to do them as formerly, this bitter root of Superſtition abides in their hearts; that's the meaning of this phraſe, *they are deeply rooted*, that is, their ſuperſtitio-

*Our young
ones may
ſee.*

*Miniſters
that coun-
ted the
things now
laid aſide,
only incon-
venient,
will take
them up
again.*

A Note
for the su-
perstitions.

U^s. to tru
worshippers

on and false worship is deeply rooted in their hearts. Well let their superstition be rooted as deep as it will, yet as Christ saith in *Mat. 15*. Every plant that my Father hath not planted shall be rooted out : God will either root thee out, or the superstition of thy heart out of thee. And seeing the false worshipers have superstition so rooted in their hearts, Oh ! how should the true worshipers of God have the truth rooted in their hearts never to be rooted out ; so Saint Paul in *Col. 2. 7*. Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith &c.

They have deeply corrupted themselves, as in the daies of Gibeah.

This must cost us a little further time for the opening of it fully: Rooted in their evil waies as in the daies of Gibeah. What hath this reference to ? the Scripture doth note the City Gibeah for two notable things ; one, that it was the City of *Saul*, and so then upon that some carry it thus : That as heretofore they cast off my Government when they chose *Saul* to be their King over them, so now they cast me off as then formerly they did.

Expol. 1.

2. Our
Authors.

But I think that's not the scope, but rather, As in the daies of Gibeah ; This hath reference to that notable story that you have in the 19. and 20. chapters of *Judges*, there you shall find what was done in the daies of Gibeah. You shall find the story of a Levite that had his Concubine gone from him and playing the whore, he went to fetch her again, and as he was returning home (the substance of the story is this) as he was coming home he would not go by no means (as his servant would have had him) to *Jebus*, because those that lived there were not of the Children of *Israel*, but he would be sure to lodge in a City that did belong to the Children of *Israel*, and when he comes to Gibeah, there expecting to have protection from that City, being they were of the Children of *Israel*, yet he found it quite otherwise, the people of the City were notorious abominable wicked people and they came by violence in the night to

to break open the doors where he lodged that they might commit ſodomy and filthineſs with him, but they obtaining him not, get his Concubine and abuſe her all night together one after another, till with a long abuſe of her they kill'd her, and ſhe lay dead at the door, upon which horrid thing, this being committed in a City that did belong to the People of God, this Levite takes a knife and cuts his Concubine (being dead) into twelve pieces, and ſends them all abroad throughout the coaſts of *Iſrael*, and bad them think upon it and conſider what ſhould be done. And upon the ſight of that, and hearing the occaſion of it, the people were amazed and ſaid, Never was ſuch a thing done, or ſeen ſince the people of *Iſrael* came out of the Land of *Egypt*. Wherefore all the People even from *Dan* to *Beerſheba* they all aſſembled to conſult what ſhould be done, in the 20. chap. they reſolved to go againſt the City of *Gibeah*; in the 11. verſe the text ſaith, *All the people were gathered together againſt the City, as one man*: and in the 13. verſe they required thoſe Delinquents to be delivered up to them. Now thoſe Children of Belial they ſtood it out and would not deliver them up; yea, and they got the *Benjamites* to joyn with them, twenty ſix thouſand Armed men to joyn with them to ſtand in defence of theſe notorious Delinquents, they got up an Army which one would not have thought that among the People God there ſhould have been gotten up an Army to have defended ſuch notorious villains as thoſe were, yet they did, but the people of *Iſrael* joyned all together and were reſolved that they would have ſuch notorious wickedneſs to be puniſhed (there was four hundred thouſand joyned together) Now in the 18. verſe, they aſked counſel of God what they ſhould do, & God gave them leave to go, and bid that *Judaſh* ſhould go up firſt, ſo they went to require theſe Delinquents and went up againſt them, but the *Benjamites* the firſt day got the victory and flew two and twenty thouſand men. Upon that the Children of *Iſrael* went up to

God

God again and wept before the Lord, and God gave them leave to go again, & they went, & the *Benjamites* came out again & slew eighteen thousand more of them: These wicked Malignants got the Victory two daies and slew fourty thousand of the Children of *Israel* that went not only by Gods leave, but by his sending, and yet for two daies together they fel before those wicked and vile wretches; but yet afterwards they went and wept and fasted, they knew that their cause could not but be good, and they were resolved they would go to God again and humble their souls before God, and fast, and pray, and then they overthrew those wicked *Benjamites*, and these of *Gibeah*; and whereas there were twenty six thousand came out against them, there was twenty and five thousand and an hundred men slain by the sword, and the City of *Gibeah* was burnt with fire; so God executed wrath upon them at length. This is the story that the Prophet hath reference to.

Now these men are wicked, *as in the daies of Gibeah*; look how it was in the daies of *Gibeah*, so now it is; there's many remarkable things to be observed from that story, in reference to this which the Prophet doth quote it for, the story in general was thus, That they stood out to defend wicked ones so as they did; it doth concern us fully in our times, and our wars are almost the very same now as then they were, for what is the main cause of our War but to fetch Delinquents to the execution of Justice? and who would have thought that such Delinquents whose burdens we groaned under in former times, and we accounted the great evil of the times, that these should find an Army to defend them? Yet perhaps sometimes we may be overcome by them, and they may for a while prevail, but let us fast before God and humble our selves more thoroughly, and certainly God will own his Cause in time as there he did. But particularly from the story first observe,

That when we make use of men as a shelter and to seek protection from them, if they shall deal vilely with us and accuse us, and

Malignants may have great Victories one after another,

Yet a good cause religiously managed prospers at last

Our times such,

Obs. I.

make

make a prey upon us, this is a most abominable and cursed wickedness in the eyes of God; This Levite came from Jebus and would not lodge with them, but to Gibeah, thinking to have had protection there, and yet these deal vily: Doth any man put himself under any of you for protection, and do you deal falsely? Oh! this is an abominable thing in the eyes of God.

Secondly, *That sometimes we may meet with worse usage from such who profess Religion and more strictness in their waies, than from those who outwardly are further off from profession.* It may be if they had gone to Jebus they would not have met with such ill usage, as they did when they came to Gibeah: sometimes it is so that they that make profession of Religion they are guilty of more ill usage to the servants of God than others that are prophane and ungodly, or of another Religion. Obs. 2.

Oh! let men take heed of this, how they behave themselves towards their Brethren, that they may not have cause to say, Lord, were we among the *Indians* or among some moderate *Papists*, or under some of the *Prelates* again we should not find such hard usage as we do from some of our Brethren who profess thy Name and seek Reformation; this were a sad thing (I say) if ever there should be cause for the Servants of God to make their moans to Heaven and cry to God. God forbid. Use.
Admonitiō
to some
Brethren
now.

Thirdly, Whereas *Israel* thought themselves holy and devout for God in the multitude of their sacrifices, and their devotion, and their services that they tendered up to God, yet God looks upon them as filthy and wicked, as the men of Gibeah were that committed sodomy and such kind of filthiness, saith God, *You have corrupted yourselves as in the daies of Gibeah*; whatsoever your fair shews are, and your sacrifices be that you offer, yet you are lookt upon as thus vile and abominable before God.

From whence therefore the Note may be, *That men may have very fair shews in the Worship of God, and do that which* Obs. 3.
may

may seem to be much for the honor of God, and yet God looking with other eyes than men do, God may behold them as filthy, abominable, and loathsome in his sight. God will not be put off with words of Reformation and the Service of God, for men may have such base ends in it, and may mix so much of themselves to corrupt the right way of God, and to keep out the right service of God with shews of serving him, that this may make them and their services to be as odious to God as the most filthy thing in the world; that's the cleer and plain Note from thence. We do not reade of such abominable filthines of body as was in the daies of Gibeab, but because of the corruptions of Gods Worship that they carried fairly, yet the Lord lookt upon it as filthy, as that was in the daies of Gibeab.

Obs. 4.

Fourthly, For men after wickedness is committed, to stand impudently, and boldly in the defence of it, and to be so far from the acknowledgment of their sin, as they will rather venture desperately the undoing of themselves than they will come in to acknowledge or let Justice have its course: this is an abominable wickedness in the eyes of God. Thus they did in the daies of Gibeab. And thus you are ready to do, not only to commit horrible wickedness and sins, but to stand in the defence of it; there is this desperate stoutness of spirit, and hardness of heart in many men, that when they are once got into the way of sin, rather than they would yield and submit, they will venture the undoing of themselves: the men of Gibeab did so, and they were undone accordingly.

Obs. 5

Yea further, Not only to stand out our selves in evil, but to joyn with others to defend them, though it be the venturing of our own undoing and others, this is further wickedness; yet how many have we of the Gentry and Nobility of the Kingdom, that do not only seek to defend themselves, but joyn with the greatest Malignants of the Kingdom, with those that are the greatest causes of evil, and were like to be the utter undoing of us all? to defend them from Justice will venture the ruin of their own families; whereas were it that

Use for
many of the
Nobility
and Gentry
of Engl.

that the Malignants were given up, they might have ſaved their eſtates families and all; Oh! that ever God ſhould leave men in ſuch horrible wickedneſs as this is! This is juſt as it was in the daies of *Gibeab*.

Sixty, *Thoſe who do ſo ſtoutly ſtand to defend wickedneſs and other men who are wicked, yet they may for a while proſper; even the men of Gibeab and the Benjamites may proſper.*

Obſ. 6.

But yet in the next place, at laſt, theſe men ſhall periſh, twenty five thouſand and an hundred of theſe twenty fix thouſand periſhed, and all the men of *Gibeab*, and the City was burnt. So, let men ſtand out as ſtubbornly and ſtoutly as they will, and ſay, What care we? they will loſe their lives and eſtates rather than they will ſubmit and yeeld, well, they may loſe all at length; you have yet (it may be) a day (ſome victory) and prevail'd at ſometime, yea, but let not mens hearts be hardened by that, nor let none of the other ſide be diſcouraged, for certainly thoſe that ſtand deſperately out in defending of wickedneſs they ſhall periſh at laſt; ſo did the *Gibeonites*.

Obſ. 7.

Yea, *But what is this to us* (might the Prophets Auditors ſay?)

Yes certainly it's much to you, for this aggravates your ſins, the ſins of forefathers (that's the Note that the Prophet makes uſe of) what was done in daies of *Gibeab*.

From whence is this Note;

That the ſins of forefathers is an aggravation of Childrens ſins, when they commit the ſame and others like unto them. And yet ſuch is the deluſion of many poor people that they excuſe the preſent ſins by the ſins of former times: As thus; ſuppoſe Miniſters or others ſhould complain of the ſinfulneſs of the times, and declaim againſt the ſinfulneſs of the times, you ſhall have ſome can ſay, Why do they keep ſuch a ſtir of the wickedneſs of the times, were they not as bad as they are now heretofore? Oh deluſion! This is the great aggravation when that thou liveſt in thoſe

Obſ. 8.

Applicat.

sins thy forefathers did, thou art it seems the child of a wicked parent, and how just had it been with God to have cut thee off presently for the sins of thy parents? and doest thou say, that thy wickedness is no other than the wickedness of thy forefathers? Certainly if the times be as ill as they were heretofore, they are worse than they were heretofore, for the evil of our forefathers is an aggravation of our present evils, if we continue in them: As the treachery of a parent would be no excuse for the treachery of a child, for him to say, my father was a Traytor: for me to excuse the sins of the present times with the sins of the former times, and say, that they were as ill formerly as now; it is just for all the world such kind of reasoning; but this is not the reasoning of the Spirit of God, he aggravates the sins of *Israel* in *Hosea's* time with the sins that were in the daies of *Gibeah*. God may let men alone in their wickedness for a long time, untill they grow to the height of their wickedness, and then God comes upon them. When the sins of the *Amorites* were full, *Now, he will remember their iniquities, he will visit their sins.* But for this phrase of Gods remembring, and visiting, that we have had before, therefore we pass it over, and come to the tenth verse.

If present times be as bad as former, then they are worse.

simile

VER. 10.

I found Israel like Grapes in the Wildernes: I saw your Fathers as the first ripe in the Fig-tree at her first time

THE scope of the holy Ghost in this, it is to upbraid the ten Tribes for their wretched ungrateful dealing with God, their sin is aggravated by Gods love towards them and their forefathers.

I found Israel like grapes in the Wildernes.

Expos.

That's thus; look as a man that hath been travelling

in

in the parched wilderneſs, and is dry, and weary, and faint, he doth come to a place in the Wilderneſs unexpectedly and finds cluſters of Grapes, from whence he hath abundance of reſreſhment to cool and moiſten him, and Oh how reſreſh'd is this poor man when he is parched in the dry Wilderneſs and beyond all expectation comes and finds a Vine full of cluſters of Grapes? this would be the moſt pleaſing thing to ſuch a man that could be; thus ſaith God, Such kind of delight had I in your forefathers. He names Grapes and Figs here becauſe they are the moſt delightful fruit of all kind of fruit to weary travellers: Now if this be ſo that God hath ſuch delight in his people as a man would have in Grapes thus in the Wilderneſs, Oh! how ſhould God be our delight when we are in the Wilderneſs? If we being his people are ſo delightful to him in the Wilderneſs, ſurely then God himſelf ſhould be delightful to us in our wilderneſs, Oh! let God in his Ordinances be to us in our troubles and afflictions as Grapes to a traveller in his Wilderneſs; ſurely if God will account us to himſelf ſo delightful, there's great reaſon that we ſhould account him to us as delightful: Some of Gods Servants have been forced to fly into the Wilderneſs, and though they have not had ſuch outward reſreſhments as we have had here that have ſet under our own Vines, and Fig-trees, yet God hath made them to find Grapes in the Wilderneſs, they have ſit under Gods Protection and his Ordinances, as a man in the Wilderneſs ſhould ſit under a Vine of Grapes and reſreſh himſelf with them.

*Applic.
God ſhould
be our de-
light in his
ordinances*

I ſaw your Fathers.

We ſhould lay to heart Gods Love to our Fathers, and ſeek to continue it to our ſelves: It's a ſad thing to look upon degenerate Children who have had fathers whom God took delight in; Your Fathers were as cluſters of Grapes that did reſreſh the very ſoul of God; as it is ſaid of Wine,

Obſerv.

Exod. 15.
2.

that it doth cheer both God and man; so the grace and holiness of your forefathers, Oh! how refreshing were they to the heart of God? But what are you, you are sour in the taste of God, what delight can God take in your unsavory and rotten corrupted spirits? Oh! it's a comfortable thing when a child is able to say, as *Exod. 15. 2. My God, and my fathers God, God was my Fathers God; and delighted in my Father, and blessed be his Name he is my God, and I hope he hath some delight in me: You who are the children of Fathers whom God delighted in as Grapes in the Wilderness, it's a mighty engagement for you to look to your selves that your hearts and lives be not corrupt, but follow the steps of your fathers, that God may delight likewise in you. But further;*

As the first ripe in the Fig-tree at her first time.

There's a great deal of elegancy in these expressions. The Fig-tree bears twice in the year, and here it is, *The first of the first time.* Their Fathers were as delightful as Grapes in the wilderness, and as the Figs, the first Figs in her first time.

Now we know that we prize fruit that is first ripe, as Cherries when they are first of all come, when they come it may be two or three into the Market, and Pease, and such kind of things when they are the first ripe of all, how they are prized? you shall have many will give any price for them. We say when Cherries come at first, that they are Ladies meat, or Longing meat: Now the Lord is pleased to condescend so much to express his love to his people, as the love of a longing woman to Cherries or other fruit, when they come first of all; as a woman hath a longing after things when they come and are first ripe; saith God, Never did woman long after any fruit when it was first ripe more than my soul hath longed after you to do you good, I have taken as much pleasure in you as ever woman could take

take when ſhe had her longing in the moſt dainty firſt ripe things: This is the meaning of the holy Ghoſt here, to ſhew the Love of God to his Saints. Many expreſſions we have in Scripture, as in Jer. 12. 10. they are call'd his *Pleasant Portion*, and the *dearly Beloved of Gods Soul*, Jer. 12. 7. and the *peculiar Treasure of God*, Exod. 19. 5. and here there are two as elegant expreſſions, as *Grapes in the Wilderneſs*, and as the *firſt ripe of the Figs in the firſt time*: Thus is Gods exceeding goodneſs to us, though we be ſapleſs in our ſelves, and have nothing in us to procure delight, yet God in his own free Grace is willing to expreſs himſelf thus to his People, Oh! what delight ſhould we have in God who takes ſuch delight in his Servants? And this expreſſion of God we think may very well hint unto us a meditation concerning the delight that God hath in young ones that do begin to give up themſelves unto him, the Lord loves the firſt fruits, and the firſt ripe of things: in Mich. 7. 1. *Wo is me, for I am as when they have gathered the Summer fruits, as the Grape gleanings of the vintage, there is no cluster to eat; My ſoul deſired the firſt ripe fruits.* So it's true, by way of alluſion at leaſt, we may apply it, the Soul of God is a longer, God is a longer; To what? To the firſt ripe fruits, to the firſt of your years, to you that are young ones: We prize highly Nettle buds when they bud out firſt; Oh! ſo graciousneſs when it buds out in youth at firſt, Oh how pleaſing is it to God! in Exod 23. 19. God would have the firſt of the firſt fruits, he would not only have of the firſt fruits, but the firſt of the firſt. God ſtands much about the firſt ſtill. And in Leviticus, 2. 14. there you read, that the Lord is ſo eager to have the firſt things? (as a longing woman) that he will not ſtay till they be ripe, he will have the green ears of Corn dried in the fire; as many women that long they will not ſtay untill the thing be ripe, but if they can have it ripened by any art, though not by the way of Nature they will ſeek to have it ripened ſo, and then they muſt needs have it; ſo ſaith God, my longing is ſo

Jer. 12. 10

Verſ. 7.

Exod. 19.

5.

Gods delight is in young ones.

Mic. 7. 1.

Exod. 23.
19.Levit. 2.
14.

ſimile

so after the first of things that I will not stay till they be fully ripe, but the Corn, though it be green ears, if they may be dried by the fire, I'll have them then. And so in

Cant. 2. 12 *Cant. 2. 12.* The flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, the Fig tree putteth forth her green Figs; and in *Cant. 6. 11.* I went down into the Garden of Nuts to see the fruits of the valley, and to see whether the Vine flourished, and the Pomegranates budded. Oh! the Lord looks up and down in Congregations that are as the Gardens of God to see such: and so in *Cant. 7. 12.* Let us get up early to the Vineyards, let us see if the Vine flourish, whether the tender Grape appear, and the Pomegranates bud forth; there will I give thee my Loves. Oh let us go and see whether the tender Grape appear, or the Pomegranate bud; there will I give thee my Loves. Where God doth see grace beginning and budding in young ones, there God manifests himself; there will I give my Loves. And this only by occasion of Gods expressing himself like a longer after the first things. Oh! give God his longing you that are yong ones, and begin to be godly betimes, you satisfie the heart of God as the first fruits satisfie a longing woman. It follows:

An Exhortation to yong ones.

But they went to Baal-Peor, and separated themselves to that shame.

But saith God here, What a *But* comes after all this? God doth manifest his delight in them as in the first ripe Grapes in the Wilderness, and the first ripe fruit, and yet behold, Oh! there's a *but* for all this.

Observe.

It's not the greatness of Gods love that is enough to engage carnal hearts: this is an evil and a sore thing to see: there was a time that God accepted of this people and delighted much in them, but now they are departed: Oh! it's ordinary for people to degenerate, though a few yeers since, how forward and zealous were they for God, and for Reformation, but within a while they grew cold, and dead, and

and formal, and ſlight, and begin to leave off all their good beginnings, and decline from God, and from his Truth.

They went to BAAL-PEOR.

God complains of this people as a Husband of an Adulteress: Though I delighted in her, and loved her, though she had all the content she could desire, yet she goes and forsakes me, and gives up her self to a filthy unclean Whoremaster: God takes it exceeding ill that he loses his love. And I beseech you observe: *There's nothing goes neerer to an ingenious heart, than the loss of Love;* he had rather lose his Money than his Love (such an one hath requited me ill for my love:) this (I say) goes to the heart of a man, and there's nothing more grieves him than that he finds his love is ill bestowed. So certainly it goes to the heart of God that his Love should be ill bestowed upon people.

They went to BAAL-PEOR.

Many loathsome and obscene things are reported concerning this *Baal-Peor*, (this god that was the god of the *Moabites*) that is unfit for chaste ears to hear, therefore we shall not mention such things; Much filthiness was committed in the worship of this their *Baal-Peor*, and yet (saith God) notwithstanding all my love to their fore-fathers; whereby they might have drawn an argument that they should have had blessings upon themselves, if they had continued in the waies of their forefathers, yet they went from me & went to *Baal-Peor*. From whence the Notes are:

First, *The more shameful any thing is, the more abominable is it to forsake God:* It's an abominable thing to forsake God, for the gaining of Heaven and Earth (if it could be gained by it) but for to forsake God for a *Baal-Peor*, God takes this ill: (but that we met with before.)

Baal-Peor.
Deus aper-
tionis, in-
dix inter-
pret. nom.
vulg. lat.
apud lati-
nos priapus
vid. Hier.
in loc. nec
non Dru-
sium.
Obs. 1.

Secondly,

Obs. 2.

Secondly, This is the evil of mans heart, *That there is no evil so base and shameful, but he is ready to forsake the blessed and glorious God, that he may cleave to that.* As it is reported of the Panther, that it doth love the dung of man so well that if it be hung up at a height, it will leap and skip for it till it bursts in pieces. So, many there are that are set upon such base things, that they are content to part with all good that there is in God and Jesus Christ, if they may but have them, they are content to undo themselves to all eternity.

The Panther.

Obs. 3.

Thirdly, *So to leave God, as to give up our selves to baseness and wickedness, Oh! this is most abominable:* To be overtaken with a sin is vile, but for one to give up himself, or herself to wickedness, this is abominable: and yet this is that that many are guilty of; at first perhaps sin is fair-mannered, and saith, Do but take some dallies with me at first, but after the soul begins to give up its self in a most desperate way in sinful courses: many an Apostate doth thus that had some comfort before in God, but now having gotten a haunt of wickedness they have lost all their comforts in God and Christ, and now saith this desperat soul, I cannot have comfort in God and Christ, and therefore I will have it in the satisfying of my lusts. Oh! my Brethren, what a shame is this? So far as thou art able to be guilty of shaming even God Himself and Jesus Christ; therefore in Heb. 6. 6. Apostates are said, *to put Jesus Christ to open shame*; an Apostate that leaves the waies of God and separates himself to his lusts, he doth put the Lord Jesus Christ to an open shame. Oh! how should Gods people separate themselves for the Lord, and be wholly his, seeing Idolaters separate themselves to their Idols? let them look upon themselves as a people separated for the Lord.

Apostates

And their abominations were as they loved.

That is, First, as they loved, so they were guided, they were

were not guided by the Word, nor by any Divine Rule, not by right Reason, but according as they loved, they followed what they had a mind to, never regarding what Gods mind was ; *The judgment is soon gone when the heart is taken with a thing.* Ordinarily people love that way they go, not that way the Rule guides them to, but what way their affections carry them on in; this is a very sinful thing for men to be acted with, and carried upon, meerly by the violence of their affections, and especially this is evil in the matters of Gods Worship, there we may not do things as we love, that is, because we think such things are very fair and there appears no hurt in them to us, and they like us well ; yea, but we must examine whether we have warrant out of the Word for that, we must not do as we love, but according as the rule is.

Secondly, *They were abominable as they loved ; they were turned into the very likeness of what they loved :* and indeed our loves what ever they are upon doth turn us into the likeness of the thing, The understanding turns the object into a likeness to it, but the heart is turned into the likeness of its object.

Austin hath a notable expression for this, saith he, Such is every man as his love is, Doth a man love the earth? he is earth ; doth a man love God? (what shall I say, saith *Austin*) he shall be even God too. And indeed the Scripture saith we are partakers of the Divine Nature, Oh ! what care had we need have of what we love, Doeſt thou love a base filthy thing? then thy soul is base and filthy too. Doeſt thou love the glorious and blessed God? then thy soul is made like to God : Chuse therefore good objects for thy love, love the Lord, and love his holy waies, love things that are excellent and glorious, and by the loving of those things thy heart will come to have excellency and glory put upon it ; but if thou lovest that which is drossy and filthy, thou comest to have a base and drossy heart of thy own. Mans soul is like to the Cameleon that

Obſ. Not what we see, but what God likes.

Perit iudicium, in quum res transiit in affectum.

Expof. 2.

Quod per voluntate resolute & efficaciter vis, hoc absolute es.

Non faciunt bonos vel malos mores, nisi boni vel mali amores. Aug. Ep. 52. ad Macedon.

The Cameleon.

Plin. Lib.

is changed into the color of the object it looks upon.

They were abominable as they loved.

Expos. 3. Every man or woman is as he loves.

Thirdly, *They were abominable as they loved.* That which is here translated of the Concrete, I find it may be as well translated of the Abstract, *They were abominable as their love:* and so it's carried by Interpreters, that is, they were abominable as their *Idols* were that they did love, and their *Idols* were call'd *Love* in the Abstract; as a man calls his Wife, his Love, so they call'd their *Idols* their *Love*, and they were abominable as their Love was, that is, look how abominable *Baal-Peor* was, so abominable were they; so the Psalmist saith, that, *they that make Idols, are like unto them.*

Expos. 4.
prefer'd.

Numb.
25. 1.

But fourthly, which I think is especially the scope of the holy Ghost here, *They were abominable as they love,* (though the other may be taken in) this Scripture hath reference to that that you read in Numb. 25. 1. there you find that the people of *Israel* by the wicked counsel of *Balaam*, when they could not be cursed, yet *Balaam* did counsel them that they should come and bring their daughters before them, and so to intice them to commit uncleanness with their daughters, and then they should intice them to Idolatry, that was the wicked counsel of *Balaam*, they committed whordom with the daughters of *Moab*, and they called the people to the sacrifices of their gods. So *They were abominable as they loved:* that is, they being inticed to bodily uncleanness, by the *Moabitish* women, these drew them likewise to the worship of their *Idols*. And so their loves to their Whores was that which drew them to this wickedness.

They were abominable as they loved; that is, they setting their love upon these wicked women that did intice them to uncleanness; according to that love of theirs were they brought

brought unto the love of Idolatry. *Solomons* wives drew him to Idolatry. And it's uſual for people to be of that Religion that thoſe are that they love, if ſo be that their hearts be taken with any, if they love any it's uſual for them to be of that Religion that thoſe are of that they love, according to their kindred, according to their friends, according to the ſtock that they marry in, ſo is their Religion. Many that have been forward in waies of Religion, and yet marry into a carnal ſtock that hath no favour of Religion, you ſhall find they will grow cold according to what their wives diſpoſitions are, according to what they love, ſo their Religion either burns hotter or grows cooler; as it was uſually laid upon *Abab* for his wickedneſs, ſuch a one was his wife: and ſo other Kings, the daughter of *Abab* was his wife, his Religion was according as he loved. And my Brethren, if thoſe who are in a falſe way can draw whom they love to it, then certainly thoſe that are in the Truth ſhould as well labor to draw thoſe who they love to the imbracement of the Truth: Wives that are naught will draw their Huſbands to that which they love, to Idolatry, to falſe worſhip; Popiſh wives have drawn more huſbands to their Popery, than Godly wives (I fear) have drawn huſbands to the Truth; Why ſhould not gracious Wives labor to draw their Huſbands to good by love, as well as wicked Wives to draw them to wickedneſs by their love. And indeed thoſe who would gain others to good muſt firſt gain their love. The women of *Moab* gained the love of the people of *Iſrael*, and ſo gained them to themſelves in the matters of Religion. So if you would do any good to people, firſt labor to gain their love; let women that have evil huſbands that they would ſain gain: how would you gain them? not by reproachful ſpeeches, but do you (though they be never ſo evil) walk lovingly towards them, that they may be convinced that your ſouls do love them, and ſo do you by your loving carriage gain their love, and that's the way to gain them

Obſ.

Admonitiō
to Saints.Popiſh
Wives.To Religi-
ous Wives.

Women in
the primi-
tive times.

Ministers
must gaine
the peoples
love.

Neighbors
& friends

to your God by that means. So divers of the women in the primitive times that had Heathenish Husbands, we have many stories of them, that by their gracious loving carriage to their Heathen Husbands they gained them to the Truth of Religion. And so Ministers, if they would gain people to God, they must gain their love, so walk before them in such a gracious holy loving way towards them, as they may gain their love, and then they will gain their souls; if there be wrangling between Minister and People, there's little hope that they will gain and do any good among that people, for people will do as they love very much. And so your neighbors and friends if you would gain them to God any way, gain their loves to you, for it's a mighty motive in matters of Religion for people to do as they love. And thus much for this tenth Verse.

VER. II.

As for Ephraim, their glory shall fly away like a bird from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception.

As for Ephraim.] A Pathetical expression, he makes a stop at Ephraim, Oh Ephraim! how sad, how much to be lamented is thy condition?

As for Ephraim, their Glory &c.

Expos.

By it is meant, all their pomp, riches, strength, prosperity, but especially by *Glory* here is meant, their numerous progeny in which they did so much glory, Ephraim (the ten Tribes) did prosper very much and were a very great multitude more than Judah. This Scripture hath reference unto the prosperous estate especially in the time of Jeroboam the second, of which you read in 2 King. 14. Ephraim was in a very prosperous condition and had prospered very much.

2 King.
14.

Their

Their Glory.

Children and numerous progeny, is accounted a glory unto people. That in which they do much glory, in *Prov. 17. 6.* *Childrens children are the Crown of old men:* (the Seventy) are the *Glory* of old men. Parents use to glory and pride themselves much in their children; (saith one) Oh! lovely pride of the Mother! so it may be said of many sons and daughters of children, Oh! the delightful pride of the Father and the Mother in such and such children.

They accounted it their Glory, For,

1. By their children themselves are multiplied. And,
2. They see what excellency soever there is in the child, they look upon it as their own, as themselves the cause of it; and men and women love themselves much, and because they are pieces of themselves therefore they glory in them. And,
3. They have some hope of continuation from Generation to Generation in their children; and this is their Glory.

But let Parents learn to give God the glory of their children, and to bring them up to the glory of God, then they may rejoyce in them indeed as a great mercy of God. In *Prov. 10. 1.* *A wise Son maketh a glad Father, but a foolish Son is heaviness to his Mother.* Why is a wise Son said to be the gladness of the Father? Why? Doth not a Mother rejoyce in a wise Son too? And why is a foolish Son said to be the sorrow of the Mother? Why? Doth not the Father sorrow and mourn for a foolish Son? The holy Ghost not without reason doth express himself thus; A wise Son makes the Father glad.

First; because the Father usually hath a more strict hand over his Son in his education to bring him to wisdom more than the Mother, ordinarily Mothers are tender over their children; and they cocker them and so make them

Obf. 1.
Pro. 17. 6.
καὶ ἡ γέννησις αὐτῶν
gloriano
70.
ô grata
superbia
matris.
Claudian
de profer-
pina.
Reaf. 1.

2.

3.

Use to
 Parents.

Pro. 10. 1.

explained.

fools;

fools, some they cannot endure that they should suffer any hardship, and hence their children proves foolish and fit for nothing, and great sorrows to them.

And secondly, A wise Son is fit for imployment abroad in the world, therefore rejoyces the heart of his Father; but a foolish Son is fit for nothing but to be at home in the Chimney corner with his Mother, and as he grows up grows stout and stubborn against her there. And if children be a glory to their Parents, they should labor to be such as they may be a glory and not a shame to them indeed. There are many which instead a glory to their parents are a great shame to them, as it was said of *Augustus Caesar*, he had three daughters that were wicked, and he used to call them his three Impostumes, and his three Cankers upon his body. And so children that should be the glory of their Parents, and the glory of a family, many times they are but the very Impostumes, and Cankers of it, and the shame to their Parents, every time they come abroad in the world. And if you expect that your children should be a glory to, you must not be a shame to them; sometimes children are a shame to their Parents, and sometimes Parents are a shame to their Children. It follows.

Their glory shall fly away like a bird.

Men glory in their outward pomp and prosperity, and their children, but both these shall fly away like a bird. That is,

1. Suddenly.
2. Swiftly.
3. Irrecoverably.

A Bird that you have in a Cage, you have kept it perhaps many months, and upon some advantage gets out and in a moment she is gone, suddenly, and then she goes away swiftly that you cannot follow her, and then Irrecoverably

Tres Vomices, tria Carcinomata. Augustus.

Parents must not be a shame to their children.

Expos. 1.

bly that you can never take her. *All outward glory is uncertain; in Prov. 23. 5. Wilt thou ſet thine eyes upon that which is not?* Certainly riches they make to themſelves wings, and fly away as an Eagle into Heaven; fly away like a Bird, and that Bird, the Eagle, that flies ſo ſwiftly that there is no getting her again: How many lately in Ireland, and in our own Land, that have had eſtates in the evening, and all hath been gone away ſwiftly like a bird before the morning? They have been rich in the morning and have been even beggars in the evening. Let us take our hearts off from glorying in all outward excellencies, and ſeek that glory that is abiding, that is conſtant, that is everlaſting: We ſhould look upon all outward comforts now as upon the wing; if ever you had cauſe to look upon all the outward comforts in the world as upon the wing, you are to do it now, never make account of any ſettlement in any comforts in the world, at this day they are all upon the wing; we cannot reaſon thus, We have enjoyed ſuch proſperity thus long, and therefore we ſhall ſtill enjoy it longer: No, all outward comforts flies away like the bird: that comes in one moment that before came not in many years. In Jer. 9. 23. Thus ſaith the LORD, Let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth, glory in this, That he underſtandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, which exerciſe, loving kindneſs, judgment, and righteouſneſs in the earth: for in theſe things I delight ſaith the Lord. Your delights are in other vain things, in eſtates, in bravery; but in theſe things I delight, ſaith the Lord God, and if you will glory, do you glory in thoſe things that I my ſelf delight in; your glory in the miſt of your proſperity which flies from you like a bird, but the Lord that is the glory of his in the miſt of their adverſities, flies to them like a bird: (I ſay) the glory of the wicked in the miſt of their proſperity flies from them like a bird, and the Lord God who is the glory of the Saints flies to them.

Pro. 23. 5.

illustrated.

Applic. to
England.
and
Ireland.

Jer. 9. 23.

illustrated.

Wealth
(wicked
mens glo-
ry) yes
from them
in proſpe-
rity, God
(the Saints
glory) flies
to them.

to them in their afflictions like a bird. Thus you have
 Isa. 31. 5. this very phrase in *Isa. 31. 5.* *As birds flying, so will the Lord*
of host defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver it, and
passing over he will preserve it. [As birds flying] it's a meta-
 phor taken from the bird when she sees the yong ones in a-
 ny danger of the Kite she flies with speed to save them,
As birds flying, so will I defend Jerusalem. Your glory gets
 away and flies from you in your prosperity, but the glory
 of the Saints flies to them in their adversity.

Secondly, The Glory of their posterity shall flee away
 like a bird; that is, The Lord will cut off their numerous
 posteritie, their yong men, that there shall be few enough
 left among them. They gloried in their number. The
 blessing of God upon *Abrahams* seed came very swiftly after
 it began to come; and now God threatens it shall go away
 as swiftly: As you may find it if you observe the story of
 the encrease of the Seed of *Abraham*, if you reckon it from
 the time of their going into *Egypt*: there was (you know)
 but threescore and ten souls that went into *Egypt* of *Abra-*
ham's seed: but when they came out of *Egypt*, which was
 but two hundred and fifteen years after they went in; for
 the four hundred and thirty is to be reckoned from the
 Promise to *Abraham* until their coming out of *Egypt*, and
 it is cleer that there were two hundred and fifteen years
 from the Promise to their going into *Egypt*, so that there
 were but two hundred and fifteen years from their going
 in, to their coming out; and see how swiftly they did en-
 crease, from three score and ten souls (for there was no
 more then, but) there came out from twenty years old and
 upwards, men of war, six hundred thousand, three thou-
 sand, five hundred and fiftie; there were encreased of *A-*
brahams seed in two hundred and fifteen years, six hundred
 thousand, and three thousand, and five hundred and fifty,
 as you may see in the book of *Numbers*; besides, the *Levites*,
 with the number of the males, from a month old and up-
 wards, was twenty and two thousand; besides the women
 and

The time
 the Israel-
 ites abode
 in *Egypt*.

and al the other children : and this was in that time when they were in bondage. Thus the Glory of *Abrahams* ſeed came very ſwiftly. And now it ſhall fly away like a bird, they ſhall decreaſe more than they did encreaſe.

Godlineſſ brings bleſſings ſwiftly, and Wickedneſſ it cauſes bleſſings to depart away ſwiftly again like a bird.

Obſerv;

It follows;

From the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception.

Gods Curſe follows the wicked cloſe : ſometimes in their birth ; ſometimes in the womb ; and ſometimes hindering the conception. You ſee how God hath us at advantage, how he hath us in his hand at every turn ; he might if he had pleaſed ſmit us in our conception ; if he had ſpar'd there, ſtifled us in the womb ; if ſpar'd there, made us ſtick in the birth.

Wherefore learn we to acknowledg Gods mercie in the general, that he is patient, and long ſuffering, and gracious to us ; let us conſider at the ſeveral paſſages of his mercy, to bleſs God not only for our general preſervation, but how he did preſerve us in the very conception, preſerves us in our mothers womb, and then in the birth, and then in the cradle, and in our childhood, in our youth, and in our middle age, in our old age, for we lie at his mercy at every point of time.

Uſe:
Gods pre-
ſervation
in our
1. Concep-
tion.
2. Womb.
3. Birth.
4. Cradle.
5. Child-
hood.
6. [Youth]
7. Middle-
age.
8. Old-age
9. [Death]

Their glorie ſhall flie away like a bird ; from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception ; of ſome I'll hinder the conception, ſome others in the womb ſhall die, others when they come to be born there they ſhall periſh in their birth, and ſo at every time my curſe ſhall follow them, from the conception, from the womb, and from the birth.

Yea and Fourthly, Though perhaps ſome may eſcape in the conception, and in the womb, and in the birth, yet it follows ;

V E R. 12.

Though they bring up children, yet will I bereave them.

THE Curse of God is here threatned to pursue them, and over-take them, though they escaped the Curse that others are under.

Obs. 1.

Many think that when they have escaped some Judgment that hath come upon some others, then they are safe enough and all is well; *But thy preservation from some Judgment that hath struck others, may be thy reservation to greater Judgments that God intends for thee afterwards.*

Obs. 2.

2. It is a judgment to be deprived of children in the womb, in the birth, but when you have endured much pain in bearing and bringing forth your children, much labor and trouble in bringing up your children, when many a thoughtful care in the education of them, much sorrow and grief they have cost you, and now when they come to be hopeful, almost to mens and womens estate, and you think to have comfort in them, now for God to take them away, this is very sad unto parents, it goes exceeding much unto their hearts to be bereaved then; yet such things as these have befallen many heretofore; and Parents though the condition must be acknowledged very sad, yet they must submit to Gods hand in this. Perhaps some of you have in the breeding of your children endured much, and through many difficulties they have been brought till they have grown up to be almost at mens and womens estates, and perhaps they have been towardly and hopeful, you had hoped to have had them to have been the staff of your age, and yet God suddenly hath made them fly away like a bird, perhaps be drowned, perhaps some other way, in a most uncomfortable manner the Lord hath bereaved you of them. You will say, The condition is sad more than ordinary. Therefore God calls you to Sanctifie his Name more than ordinary, to exercise grace more

*Especially
if untimely
deaths.*

more than ordinary, and the exerciſe of grace in ſuch an extraordinary ſtroke of God upon you may be as great a good and comfort, as great a bleſſing unto you as the enjoyment of your child would have been. If a tender mother that through all her care, and pain, and labor, after breeding and bringing up a child, ſhould have him taken away in ſome untimely death (as you call it) ſhe would think her condition the ſaddeſt of any living. Be it known to you, perhaps ſome may be here, or know others of their friends that have had ſuch a hand of God upon them, be but convinced of this one thing which I know you cannot deny, That the exerciſe of grace ſutable to this work of God that is now upon thee, or againſt thee, conceive it as thou wilt, I ſay, the exerciſe of thy grace ſutable to this work of God is a greater good to thee than the life of thy child could have been, it could never have done thee that good as the exerciſe of grace may do in this condition when it is ſutable to this ſtroke of God upon thee; and this indeed is the only way to make up any loſſes of children, or loſe of any goods, be it a child, be it a husband or the deareſt friend, a wife, or thy eſtate, yet the exerciſe of thy grace is better than the enjoyment of them all. It follows;

There ſhall not be a man left.

I'll bereave them when they bring them up, (the words are [*not a man*,] and *left* is not in the Original) that they be not men. And ſometimes God lets the children of men and women live, and yet they never come to be men, but ſtrikes them in their underſtandings that they are bereaved of them ſo far that they never come to be men. I remember it's reported of *Sr Thomas Moore* that his wife was mightily deſirous of a Boy, (that was her word) and ſhe had one that proved a fool, and ſaith her husband to her, You were never quiet till you had a boy, and now you have one that be all his life a Boy.

Obſ. 3.

*Sr Tho.
Moore.*

I will bereave them that there shall not be a man left.

2. But I rather think the meaning is, I will take them away that they shall not live to be men, strong men of war. You boasted your selves that you had so many of your children that were such valiant men of war before, but I'll bereave you of them (saith the Lord.)

Yea, wo to them when I depart from them.

Surely, even *wo to them*; he puts a sureness upon this, *Wo to them when I depart from them.* As if the holy Ghost should say, What do I threaten this or the other evil, the great evil of all, the rise of all evils is, Gods forsaking them, *Wo also to them when I depart from them.*

Expos.

God departs from a people, or a particular soul, when he withdraws his goodness and mercy from them: and the reason why wicked men for a time do enjoy good things, it is, because Gods time is not yet come to depart from them; but when Gods time is come to depart from them, then all vanishes suddenly: As the light continues so long as the Sun is in the firmament, but as soon as ever it is gone it grows to be dark, the darkness of the night comes suddenly. A man hath strength and health so long as his vitals hold, but as soon as ever the vitals are struck, the crasseis of the body, if that be stricken the strength and health goes. The general presence of God with his Creature keeps strength and health, it's God in the creature that keeps its comforts, and upon Gods departing all vanishes and comes to nothing. Thou hast thy prosperity now, and thou thinkest thou maiest enjoy it still; but how canst thou tell but God may suddenly depart, and then all is gone? The alteration of mans condition is not only from Natural causes, but heigher, from *Gods departing*. Carnal hearts think themselves safe if they do not see how Natural causes shall work their ruin, they see nothing, but as they have enjoyed much

simile.

simile

Obs. 4.

Use.

much good from Natural cauſes, ſo they ſee them working ſtill for good to them.

Yea, but know that thy proſperity, or thy adverſity depends not upon Natural cauſes, but upon a higher cauſe, though thou haſt the confluence of all Natural cauſes working for thee as much as ever, yet if God pleaſes to withdraw himſelf thou art a loſt creature.

And ſo it is with a Kingdom. When God pleaſes to depart from a Kingdom, he doth then take away Wiſdome from the Wiſe, he gives them up to their own Counſels, to perverſe Counſels, he blinds them that they cannot forſee their danger, nor ſee means to help them, but they ſhall take waies as if they intended to deſtroy themſelves. If God do but leave them, whatſoever their wiſdom was before, all their endeavors they ſhall be blaſted and come to nothing, & in this it is we ſhould ſanctifie Gods Name, and acknowledge it, acknowledge our immediate dependance upon God for all our outward good we enjoy, whatſoever ſecond cauſes we have to help our ſelves.

Wicked men will not take notice of him in their Comforts, they cry out of this and the other cauſe of their evil, but it's Gods departing from them, that is the great thing they ſhould take to heart. Particular evils muſt not be taken ſo much to heart as this of Gods departing: Whatſoever our condition be, yet if God be not departing we are well enough, though in the fire, though in the water, I will be with thee ſaith the Lord. Mark the ground of the confidence of the Saints in the time of affliction: in *Pſalm. 46.* (*Luther's Pſalm* it's called, that is, a Pſalm that Luther was wont to call to his friends to ſing, when he heard of any danger that they were in, or any ſad thing fallen out, Come (ſaith he) let us ſing the 46. Pſalm; And mark the confidence of the Saints) *We will not fear though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the miſt of the ſea. Though the waters thereof rore and be troubled, though the mountains ſhake with the ſwelling thereof; though the hea- ven*

*Pſal. 46.
Luthers
Pſalm.*

rage.

rage, and the Kingdoms be removed, yet al shal not trouble us. Why, what's the ground? *The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.* And it's twice repeated in the same words in the Psalm, God is not gone, God is not departed, therefore no great matter what men can do unto us: But if one be in misery and have God departed, Oh! how dreadful is that condition! It was a dreadful speech of *Saul*, in 1 Sam. 28.15. *I am sore distressed, for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me.* Oh! when the *Philistines* make war upon a people, when there is enemies at our gates, and then our consciences shall tell us, that God is departed from us, this is a sad condition: It was a woful speech of *Saul*; God is now departed when I have most need of him: Wo to them then. For,

1 Sam.
28.15

Real. why
Gods de-
parting is
a cause of
wo.
None can
help then.

First, The root of all evil is very deep that is upon us when God is departed: It doth not lie in this particular, or that particular, we might make shift to get over them, the spirit of a man might sustain his infirmity; but the root of the evil it lies in the departing of God, And what can the Creature do when God is departed? As the King of *Israel* when the women said, *Help O King.* Saith he, *If the Lord doth not help thee, whence shall I help thee?* And as all creatures say, If God be departed, we cannot help, nay, the very Devil cannot help if God be gone: In 1 Sam. 28. when *Saul* was sore distressed and he would raise up *Samuel*, and the Devil came in the likeness of *Samuel*, saith he, *Wherefore dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee?* No Creatures in the world, nor Devils can do good when God is departed, then the evil is only evil when God is gone. An evil may have much good in it, and God may sanctifie it for abundance of blessings to his People so long as he continues with them; but if he be gone, then the evil is only evil: And if God be gon all protection is gon, and therefore thou liest liable to all kind of evils whatsoever. And however for the present things do seem to be good that are remaining, yet the blessing of it is gone if
God

Satan him
self cannot
1 Sam. 28

Evil then
is evil in-
deed.

God be not with thee. And this evil that is upon thee it is no other but the forerunner of eternal evil, and the creature certainly then muſt needs ſink when God is thus departed. Oh! If ſo be that it is ſo woful a thing for God to depart from a people here in this world in regard of the withdrawing of outward things and mercies from them, what is it then for the Lord to depart for ever from the ſoul? What an alteration doth the departing of the Sun make? Take a delightful Sunshine Summers day, and how beautiful is it? Now compare that with a winter, dark diſmal night; What makes the difference between theſe two? The preſence of the Sun in the one, and the Sun is departed from the other. It is but the preſence, or the departing of one creature. Oh! if the preſence or the departing of one creature makes ſuch a difference in the world, what doth the preſence or the departing of the infinite God do to the ſoul? Let the Saints who enjoy Gods preſence prize it, and pray as the Prophet did, *Lord leave us not.*

*It is the
forerunner
of eternal
evil.*

ſimile

*Saints
ſhould prize
the enjoy-
ment of
Gods pre-
ſence.*

Uſe.

Oh! how vain is the heart of man that will depart from God? If thou depart from him, he departs from thee too, and wo to thee whatſoever thou haſt when the Lord is gone and departed from thee.

The Lord departs from particular men and women, as well as from Kingdoms and Nations, and wo to them alſo: when God departs from a particular man or woman he doth withdraw his common gifts and graces, and comforts that they were wont to have, he doth curſe all means for good unto them, and he gives them up unto temptations; thoſe are the three ſpecial things that God doth in departing from any particular ſoul, he withdraws the common gifts and graces that they had, and the comforts that follows, and curſes the means that may do them good, and gives them up to the ſtrength and power of temptation.

You will ſay (it may be) *Many a ſoul that doth deſire further preſence of God may be afraid out of this that God is departed.*

Queſt.

Now

Answ,

Now though God (no question) may in some degree withdraw himself even from his Saints, so as they may be afraid that God is gone and departed from them; yet there's this one evidence to thee, let thy condition be never so sad, yet if thou beest a Saint (I say) this is one evidence that God is not wholly gone, if he leaves any kind of shine behind him so far as makes thy heart to be longing after him; God doth not so depart from his Saints but he leaves some luster, some little glimmering of himself behind, so much as the soul sees which way God is gone, so much as serves to draw the heart of a poor sinner after himself and makes it restless and unquiet till it comes to be in Gods presence again; As when a Candle is taken out of a room, the room is darker than it was, yet there's a glimmering left behind in that, if you go quickly you may follow: When God departs from hypocrites, he departs so as he leaves nothing behind him, and they have not so much of God as makes them make after God, and so they turn away from God and seek to make up the loss of God in some other thing; but a Saint of God that hath God beginning to depart in any degree, when God is gone, he will not turn aside to seek to make up the loss of God in any other thing else, but he hath so much of God as doth strongly carry his heart after him, that he looks, and sighs, and groans, and cries after the Lord, and as *David* in *Psal. 119. 8.* there he shews us that God was in some degree departed from him, (in his own sense at least) but mark his expression there, and that one Scripture may much help any soul that is afraid that God is departed: *I will keep thy Statutes: O forsake me not utterly.* Oh Lord, me thinks I feel that thou art a going, I feel that I have not those comforts I was wont to have, those stirrings of thy Spirit as I was wont to have, but O Lord, yet for all this, I will keep thy Statutes (saith *David*) I am resolved though I should never have further comforts from thee, yet Lord I will keep thy Statutes, do with me what thou wilt,

Ple

simile

Psal. 119. 8.

illustrated

Ile do what I can to honor thee, and Lord forſake me not utterly. So long as thy heart can cloſe with this text and ſay thus as *David*, *Lord, I will keep thy Statutes*, though I feel not thy preſence with me as I was wont to do, yet Lord I will do what I can to honor thee, though I be in a ſad condition, and thou ſeemeſt to leave me, yet Lord I will keep thy Statutes, Oh Lord forſake me not utterly. So long as thou canſt make uſe of *David's* expreſſion as thine own, it is an evidence God is not ſo departed as he uſes to depart from Hypocrites, and wicked and ungodly men. And if it be ſo woful a thing when God departs, truly then when God is about departing we had need cry mightily to him, both for Kingdoms and particular ſouls. When a Malefactor ſtands before the Judg and is crying for mercy, if the Judg be a riſing off the Bench, then he liſts up his voice, and then ſhreeks out indeed, Good my Lord, then he ſees if the Judg be gone off from the Bench, he is a loſt man: ſo when we ſee God going, as many footſteps of Gods departing from us there have been, and are, and yet ſtill God leaves a light behind, bleſſed be God we have a light of Gods preſence, and God is no further departed from us, but ſo that he hath left ſo much of himſelf as we may know where to have him. It follows.

We ſhould labor to do what we can for God though we apprehend he hath left us.

When we ſee God beginning to depart, cry mightily. ſimile.

Applic. to England.

VER. 13.

Ephraim, as I ſaw Tyruſ, is planted in a pleaſant place: but Ephraim ſhall bring forth his Children to the Murderers.

WHAT, God departed? Wo to us when God departs from us. Why? but *Ephraim* might bleſs himſelf in his prosperous condition in which he was, *Ephraim* (might ſay) What do you ſpeak of Gods departing? We are in a good condition, it's but your melancholly fears that makes you ſpeak of ſuch fears as theſe are, we were never ſtronger, nor never had better fortifications, nor never prospered better than we do; and as I told you,

Expoſ.

K k

this

2 King. 14

Venice.

Rupes.

715

Quintus

Curius.

Lib. 4. de

Reb. gestis

Alexandri.

Plin. lib. 5.

cap. 19.

The Colo-
nies of Ty-
rus.

Ezek. 27.

this hath reference to the time of *Jeroboam* the second, and the Prophet grants it, that they were in a prosperous estate, *Ephraim* was like *Tyrus* planted in a pleasant place as *Tyrus* was; *Tyrus*, it was a brave City, an Island in the Sea, much like (as it's reported) that famous City in *Italy*, [*Venice*] which is in the Sea about seven hundred paces from the Land, it is built as it were upon a rock in the Sea; and so indeed the word signifies, it comes from a word that in the Hebrew signifies a Rock: it was a very exceeding strong place. *Quintus Curtius* in his fourth book of the Story of *Alexander*, saith that, *Alexander* in his conquest had more to do to conquer *Tyrus* than all *Asia* besides, it was such a mighty and strong place. *Pliny* saith the compass of it was nineteen miles. It was the general Mart almost of all the world, and it was a City very full of people; and to this the Prophet hath reference, when he saith, *Ephraim* was like *Tyrus*; because *Ephraim* did so glory in his numerous Progeny; for *Tyrus* was a mighty populous place, as *Pliny* saith of it, that there were three other ancient Cities came out of it, as *Leptis Utica*, and that great *CARTHAGE* that was but a spring out of this root, that *CARTHAGE* that was such a famous City that did strive a long time for the Emper of *Rome*, and the Monarchy and Dominion of the whol world; *Yea* and *Gades* divided (as it were) from the rest of the earth, were peopled from hence: We need not go so much to the Authors that write about this City and the braveness of it, for in *Ezek. 27.* you have a description of the City *Tyrus*, as a most brave, rich, and glorious City. Ob! thou that art situate at the entry of the Sea, which art a Merchant of the people for many Isles: thus saith the Lord God, O *Tyrus*, thou hast said I am of perfect beauty; Thy borders are in the midst of the Seas, thy builders have perfected thy beauty. And then in the 33. verse, When thy Wares went forth out of the Seas thou filledst many people, thou didest enrich the Kings of the earth with the multitude of thy riches and of thy Mercandize: Now saith the Lord here, *Ephraim* is thus,

thus, ſhe ſaid to her ſelf, that ſhe was ſo prosperous, and ſtrong, and rich every way, ſhe was like to *Tyrus*, I grant it ſaith the Prophet, and I have ſeen it ſo, *Ephraim* is the very ſame even then when I am departing from her.

So that from hence we may ſee, *That at the very time when God is departing from a Kingdom, or a particular man or woman, they may be in the greateſt proſperity that ever they were in all their lives*: When thou art neereſt eternal miſery thou maielt be in the higheſt degree of outward proſperity that ever thou waſt in all thy life. Phyſicians ſay that the uttermoſt degree of health in the body, is next unto ſickneſs. It's true here, that the higheſt degree of outward proſperity, it's but the forerunner of ruine; Oh! let us learn never to truſt in our proſperity, but alwaies to walk with fear and trembling before the Lord, never let us think that we are ſafe and well becauſe we have outward things at our wills, we may have them at our wills and yet that very night the word may come, *This night ſhall thy ſoul be taken away*, as you know it was with the rich man in the Goſpel, when he had his barns full and was in conſultation what to do, yet now ſhall thy ſoul be taken from thee. And *Nebuchadnezzar* at that very time when he was glorying in his Magnificent Pallace that he had made, now the word comes out againſt him.

Again, eſpecially it ſhould teach us, *not to truſt* (as in no outward proſperity ſo) *not in any fortifications, nor ſtrength*. *Tyrus* was an invincible place (it ſeems to be ſo) yet God could pul it down: nor to truſt in the multitude of Soldiers: This example is as famous as any to teach men not to truſt in any outwards whatſoever.

Calvin he carries it in ſomewhat a different way, and truly not without ſome probability neither. *I ſaw Ephraim that thou wert planted in a pleaſant place, as in Tyrus*, ſo he carries it thus, that is, Thou art a plant like to the plants that were in *Tyrus*. And the word tranſlated, *pleaſant place*, it's a word that ſignifies *building*: becauſe they uſe

Obſ. 1.

Vltimus ſanitatis gradus, eſt morbo proximus.

Ule.

Take heed in our proſperity.

Obſ. 2.

Expoſ. 2.
Calvin in loc.

בנין

to build the most delightful places; it signifies also a secure place of habitation, now (saith he) *Tyrus* it was upon a Rock, and therefore they had little ground for Orchards, or Gardens, or Plants, but only such as were made by art, and with a great deal of cost and charges, and (saith he) As men when they are striving with Nature, if they mean to do any thing at all, they will do it to purpose, and fetch out the most curious plants and bestow a great deal of cost to cover them from the coldness of the winter, as we see in places that are neer the Sea, that meerly by art they fetch out a place for a Garden or Orchard, they are mighty chargable. So *Ephraim* was compared to such a plant, that is, God was at a great deal of charge for it, and very careful he was to preserve them. As you heard the last day, God compar'd his love to his people to a longing woman that longed for the first ripe fruits; so Gods love was towards his people, and here God compares his respect to his people; as a man or woman would do to a tender plant that is in a Garden or Orchard that is made with abundance of cost and charge, look how careful they would be to preserve some tender plant in covering of it, and keeping of it from being mixt with the frost, (saith he) such was my care towards *Ephraim*, howsoever they have served me. Thus to aggravate their sins God doth shew his care of them (thus *Calvin*.) But saith the text for all this, though my care hath been thus over them, yet they shall bring forth their children to the murderers.

Oblen. God never shews so much respect to any man or woman, but upon their forsaking of him, wrath doth follow. Yet after all this they shall bring forth their children to the murderers, as if so be their children had been born for no other end, but to satisfy the mouth of the sword, to be objects of the fury of the murderers; and those children that they shall bring forth in their war, they shall send them forth, just as if a man did send a company of beasts to the slaughter-house.

They

They ſhall bring them forth to the murderers.

Sometimes indeed in war men are led forth even by the treachery or the ſpight at leaſt of Commanders in the war, only that they might be a prey to the murderers; if any wicked Officers in an Army have a ſpight againſt a man, or any particular company of men, ordinarily their ſpight is moſt againſt godly men in their Army, a wicked, ſwearing, deboiſt Officer that hath a ſpight againſt godly men in an Army he will ſet them upon the moſt desperat ſervice, there enjoin them upon pain of death to do ſervice and not to ſtir, on purpoſe that they might be cut off, or at leaſt hoping that they will fall into the hand of the murderer. Juſt in this caſe like to *David*, for his own ends in another way, that would ſet *Uriah* in the forefront and would have others withdraw from him; on purpoſe that he might fall by the enemy.

The villany of malitious Commanders in war againſt the godly.

They ſhall bring forth children to the murderers.

Many children have been brought forth to the murderers even in this way. (But for the Observations from the words.)

Fiſt, *The Curſe of God ſtays not upon the Parents, but goes forwards to the children*; It's for the ſin of the parents that the children are to be brought forth to the murderers, and eſpecially it ſtaies not upon Idolaters, but goes to their children. There are two branches in this Note.

Obſerv.

1. The Curſe of God ſtaies not upon the parents, but goes towards the children; in *Deut. 28. 18.* *Cursed ſhall be the fruit of thy body*, and eſpecially to the children of Idolaters. In *Pſal. 137. 8.* *O daughter of Babylon, who art to be deſtroyed; happy ſhall he be that rewardeth thee as thou haſt ſerved us, happy ſhall he be that taketh and daſteth thy little ones againſt the ſtones.* And in *Iſa. 13. 18.* *Their Bowes alſo ſhall daſh the young men to pieces, and they ſhall have no pity on the fruit of the womb;*

1. Part.
Deut. 28. 18.
Pſal. 137. 8.

Iſa. 13. 18.

*2d Com-
mandment* womb; their eye shall not spare children. So in the second Com-
mandment, the Lord there threatens, to visit the sins of the
fathers, upon the children, to them that hate him, to the
third and fourth generation.

Object. You will say, *Why should children suffer for their parents sins?*

Answ. You will kill yong Vipers and Snakes though they ne-
ver have stung. So, God sees guilt enough in the children
of wicked men and of Idolaters, so that in Justice he may
destroy them; but he doth rather take advantage to destroy

Note. them, because they be the children of wicked men and
of Idolaters: As if a man commit TREASON, he
deserves death then for his own fault; but if the King
hear that his Father and Grandfather were Traitors, he
shall die the rather because of them. So it's true, the chil-
dren of godly people have sin and guilt in them, as well
as the children of wicked men; Yea, but the children of
wicked men having guilt, and so liable to Gods Justice,
God will take the advantage the rather to do them Justice
because their parents was wicked and ungodly; and this
is righteous enough with God.

2d Part. And the children of Idolaters above all shall not be spa-
*Sced of I-
dolaters.* red, and especially those that live to many years, because
there is no sin that is so much strengthened from their An-
cestors, and the example of their Forefathers as Superstition
and Idolatry is;

*Idolatry de-
pends much
on Ancestors* Why should we be wiser than our Fore-
fathers? What's the argument of our superstitious vani-
ties, but our Forefathers did thus? And therefore that's

*2d Com-
mandment
illustrated* observable, That there's no Commandment in the Ten
threatens Gods judgments upon the children, but the se-
cond Commandment,

Because that there's no Commandment broken from
the example and plea of forefathers as the second Com-
mandment; and therefore let the children of Idolaters
and false Worshipers look to it, that they repent from
the sins of their forefathers; Instead of pleading for the
sins of your forefathers, you should fall down and humble
your

*Superstiti-
ous chil-
dren ad-
monished,*

your ſouls for the ſins of your forefathers, or otherwiſe that's the very reaſon that God will puniſh the ſins of the forefathers upon the children, becauſe their fathers did worſhip God in a falſe way, and they will do ſo too.

And then another Note is this, *That as this is a heavy fruit of Gods Curſe upon a people for the Parents ſins, for Gods Curſe to follow to the children: ſo this is a ſpecial fruit of Gods Curſe upon children, That they ſhall be brought forth to the Murderers.* In times of War if you make not your peace with God it's juſt with God that things ſhould be ordered ſo that your children ſhould be brought forth to the Murderers. Oh! you tender hearted Mothers, who are loth that the wind ſhould blow upon your children, look upon them and pity them, how can you endure to ſee their blood gush out, how can you endure to ſee your little ones ſprawling in the ſtreets, or upon the pikes of the Soldiers? If your hearts cannot endure this, ſeek to make your peace with God, to deliver your ſelves and your children from this curſe that hath befallen many. We know not what theſe wars may bring forth, what they have done in Ireland we have heard much of, how the Parents have lookt upon their children brought forth to the Murderers; and though it's true, in many Cities and places where the Enemy hath come they have not generally (at leaſt) broke forth to ſuch abominable cruelties as this is, but who knows what a Summer or two may bring forth; for certainly where War continues it drives on with more and more rage.

You will ſay then, *Oh! let us make peace upon any terms.*

No, let it rather be your care to make your peace with God, that's your way to deliver your children from being brought forth to the Murderers; for if it be a falſe peace it may be but a further way to bring forth your children to the Murderers. It is an extream bad Curſe of God, in this eſpecially, when it ſhall come before their very Parents fight, for ſo the Prophet ſpeaks as if they ſhould be brought forth

Obſ.

Tender-
hearted
Mothers.The Iriſh
war.The Eng-
liſh Look-
ing glaſs.

Object.

Anſw.

forth

*Dij si qua
est in Cælo
pietas, qui
taliam curet,
præmia
reddent
delicta, pa-
tri s fœda-
sti funere
vultus.
Virg.*

*Children
should be-
seech their
parents to
repent.*

forth even before them: Many of the Heathens have very Pathetical expressions about the sad condition of Parents when their children are slain before their eyes: as that of Priamus Son Polites that was slain by Pyrrhus, he cries to his gods, *Oh! if there be any thing in Heaven that doth take care of such things, come and revenge this* (saith he,) when as Pyrrhus slew his Son before his eyes. Thou hast before the very face of the Father even sprinkled the blood of the child upon his face: he was not able to bear it though he saw himself ready to die next, but cries to the very Heavens to revenge it. And that was a very sad story of the Emperor *Mauritius*, that his Sons, and Wife, and Daughters were brought before his eyes and slain before him: This is the woful evil that falls upon Kingdoms. And if your children did but understand this very text that now I am opening, they would even look upon you and cry with tears in their eyes, *Oh Father! Oh Mother! Repent, repent, and seek God for your selves and for us, Oh! repent, and make up your peace with God that we may not be brought forth to the Murderers.*

Oh! but if this be so great an evil for Parents to have their children to be brought forth to the Murderers here, how great an evil then is it for Parents to bring forth children to be fewel for Gods wrath for all eternity, to be the firebrands for Gods wrath to burn upon, millions of years to all eternity? You then that are Parents, and have children, look upon them and have such thoughts as these that may break your hearts, Oh! what a sad thing would it be that such a babe that came out of my womb should be a fire-brand for Gods wrath to burn upon to all eternity? Oh! how had I need pray and bring up my children in the fear of God, lest I should be such an unhappy Father that out of my loyns, should not only bring forth a child to the Murderers, but for the Devils in Hell? But let not this discourage you that are godly to venture your children in lawful Wars, for when you shall labor to make up your

*A meditation
for pa-
rents.*

your peace with God, in ſuch a cauſe if you be willing to ſacrifice your children to God, if thy child ſhould be brought forth even to death, yet he is but brought forth even to Martyrdom, rather than to the Murderers: Thou ſhouldeſt rather rejoyce that thou haſt a child to bring forth in ſuch a Cauſe, then to be overpreſt with ſorrow that the life of thy child hath been taken away with the Murderers; & ſome of your children though with the loſs of their own lives, yet they have been a means to keep you, and us all from the hand of the Murderer, to keep the City and the Kingdom from being over-run with Tyranny, Idolatry, and all kind of Prophaneſs, and it may be worth the lives of your children that good that hath been done.

Revel. 12. 11. And they overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the Word of their Teſtimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoyce ye Heavens, and ye that dwell in them. *Revel. 12. 11.*

They loved not their lives unto the death: therefore rejoyce ye Heavens, and them that dwell therein. *enlightened*

When parents ſhall be willing to give up their children in the Cauſe of God, even children ſhall be willing to ſacrifice themſelves in Gods Cauſe, (I ſay having made up their peace with God) then when they love not their lives unto the death, there ſhall be joy in Heaven, and they ſhall overcome in dying even as Jeſus Chriſt did. I remember I have read of *Zenophon*, when he was ſacrificing to their Idol gods, he wore a Crown upon his head, and there came news to him that his child was dead, he preſently pulls his Crown from off his head in token of ſorrow; but then asking how he died, answer was made, That he died in the Wars: Then he calls for his Crown again. So perhaps ſome of you have loſt your Children, nature cannot but work, yea but then ask how they loſt their lives, they loſt their lives valiantly in a work that did as much concern the glory of God as ever any War did, and ſeeing they died ſo, rather bleſs God than be ſo ſorrowful that they fell into the hand of Murderers. It follows.

*Zeno:
phon.*

VER. 14.

Give them, O Lord : what wilt thou give ? Give them a miscarrying womb, and dry breasts.

THIS follows, upon this that they shall be brought forth to the Murderers hand. Then, *Lord, give them, what wilt thou give them ? Give them a miscarrying womb, and dry breasts.*

Expos. 1. Some think this was an Imprecation by a spirit of Prophecie, as if the holy Prophet had his heart fill'd with the wrath of God, *Give them Lord ; what wilt thou ? give them a miscarrying womb, and dry breasts,*

2. Preferd But rather according to most Interpreters, I think this expression is rather an expression of Commiseration, (that is) foreseeing the lamentable condition that the ten Tribes should be in ere long, the Prophet pities their condition, and would fain come in and pray for them, and he begins, *Give them, O Lord* (saith the prophet;) and then he makes a stop, as if he should say, but O Lord what shall I say for them, *Give them;* but Lord I know not what to ask for them, I am at a stand when I consider what they are, what the many mercies they have had already, what warnings they have had, how hardened they are in their sin, and how thy word is gone forth, but Lord give them : shall I say; Lord give them deliverance, give them peace, give them prosperity still, Lord I dare not, that I cannot ask, all means have been used for to bring them unto thee, and yet they stand out against the Lord; thou knowest they are deer to me, they are of my flesh, and I should be glad that they might be saved, but thy glory is dearer to me then they are, and therefore for that I cannot pray : and therefore the Prophet praises, *Give them,* seeing all this misery must befall them; what, shall the enemies be let out upon them? shall they and their children be made a prey to the Murderer? Lord, rather let no more be born of them, rather

ther

ther let thoſe children that otherwiſe ſhould have been born and might have lived in their own Land, Lord God, let them not be born rather than come to live to ſo great miſery; ſo he doth not pray for a miſcarrying womb and dry breſts abſolutely, but comparatively. From whence the Notes are.

Fiſt; *That mens ſins make many times Gods Miniſters and his Saints at a point that they know not what to ſay in prayer.* Truly, though there hath bee a mighty Spirit of prayer through Gods mercy in the Kingdom, yet conſidering that ſince God hath come to ſhew himſelf willing to deliver us, and Chriſt hath been coming even upon his white Horſe in peace to take the Kingdom to himſelf, ſince that time ſuch a ſpirit of Malignity hath appeared againſt Chriſt and his Saints as ever was in the Kingdom, it puts many of the Miniſters and Saints of God to a *non-plus* in their prayers, and ſtraightens their very hearts in the day of their ſalting, when they are to ſeek God, that the Lord would give forth mercy, The Lord knows that the condition we are in is more unfit for mercy than we were at the very fiſt day; Thus a Nation, thus particular people may put the Servants of God to a ſtand in their prayers, and ſtraighten their hearts; Oh! were it that people had gone on in the embracing of Reformation as they ſeem'd to do at the fiſt, Oh! how enlarged would the hearts of the Saints have been in prayer? Oh Lord! give *England* mercy, give *England* deliverance.

Obſ. 1.

England
more unfit
for mercy
now than
at the fiſt

And then a ſecond Note is this, *That the fruitfulneſſ, or the barrenneſſ of the womb, it is from God.* Give them, give them a miſcarrying womb and dry breſts. This is from God; in Gen. 30. 2. when Rachel cried for children, Give me children or elſe I die, the text ſaith, that Jacobs anger was kindled againſt Rachel, and ſaid, *Am I in Gods ſtead?* Paulus Phagiſ (that learned man) ſaith, that the Hebrews have this ſpeech, that there are four keys that are in Gods hand that he gives not into the hand of any Angel.

Obſ. 2.

Gen. 30. 2

Paulus
Phagiſ.
Four Keys
in Gods
hand.

1. *Clavis
pluvie.*

1. The Key of the Rain; and that you have in *Deut. 28. 12. The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, the Heaven to give thee rain unto thy Land in his season.*

2. *Clavis
cibitionis.*

1. There's the Key of Food; in *Pf. 145. The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season; thou openest thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.*

3. *Clavis
sepulcrum.*

3. There's the Key of the Grave, in *Ezek. 37. 12. Behold, Oh my people I will open your Graves, and cause you to come up out of your Graves.*

4. *Clavis
sterilitatis.
Non nup-
tiae dant
liberos, sed
qui nuptijs
legē dedit
Deus.*

4. And lastly, The Key of the Womb, and that is in *Gen. 38. 22.*

These four Keys God keeps in his own hand, and therefore Gods providence is to be observed in this, and there ought to be a submission to his hand in it.

Thirdly, *Sin may bring such evil times upon a people as better those who live to such times had not been born, or died before those times had come; Give them a miscarrying womb and a dry breast, if they should have children that should live to endure all the miseries of those times that are coming, they had been better not to have been born, or have died long before this time saith the Prophet, We must take heed of wishing this upon every little affliction that doth befall us, as it is the frowardness of many people even with God himself, that if their children do but anger them to wish they had never been born, or cold in the mouth many years ago, I wish I had gone to your Grave: Parents many times are ready to wish their children that they had never been born of them; but this is frowardness against God himself, and wickedness; those that are so ready to wish their children had not been born, they are the least sensible of the sin that doth cause the affliction upon which they do wish such a thing as that is.*

Give them a miscarrying womb, and dry breasts.

Reas. 1.

First; There may be either such miserable slaughters as that

that Parents might even wiſh that they never had any Children.

Or Secondly, They may live under ſuch cruel tyranny *Reaf. 2.* for their ſouls and bodies.

Or thirdly, They may be drawn from God by falſe Religion, and ſo may be in a condition worſe than if they had not been born. *Reaf. 3.*

Hence Parents to whom God denies children or takes them away, they ſhould quiet themſelves in Gods diſpoſe, eſpecially in ſuch times as theſe are: it may be God hath taken away your children to deliver them from greater evils: as in the houſe of *Jeroboam*, there was but one child that had any good in it, and ſaith God, *That child ſhall die*, and gives the reaſon, *Be cauſe it had ſome good in it.* So that God takes away many that he hath the moſt love unto, and lets others to live that he hath not ſo much love unto. *Uſe. 1. Parents to ſubmit. 1 King. 14. 13.*

Yes, (ſome may ſay) If I were ſure that their ſouls were ſafe, though God doth take them away, if I were ſure of their ſalvation, then I would be content. *Queſt.*

That's true indeed, If your children were ſaved, what hurt is that to be taken away here and received to Heaven, and there to live for ever with Chriſt, not to ſin, or ſorrow more: but howſoever you may ſatiſſie your ſelves in theſe three things. *Anſw.*

First, That they are under an indefinite promiſe, though not an univerſal.

Secondly, Suppoſe he ſhould not be ſaved, then it were better that he ſhould be taken away than to live to ſin more againſt God, he might have lived to have done a great deal of miſchief in the world if he were one that God did not intend to ſave, and therefore quiet thy ſelf. However God ſees further than thou doeſt, either when he denies thee Children, or takes them away in ſuch times as theſe are. *Uſe. 2. Evil times good times to die in.*

Further, In times when publick evils are threatned, they are

are good times to die in; If better not to be born in evil times, then certainly it is no great evil to die in evil times. *Good men are taken away from the evil to come.* As if a woman had her breast to be launc'd or cut off, would not the tender Father take the Children out of the room in the mean time? Who knows but God may have the breast of his Church (our Mother) even to be cut off for a time, yet may suffer heavier things than ever she hath done, and if God shall take away his tender Children that will not be able to bear such a sight as that, what great evil is it? As we reade of God towards *Moses*, when Gods Glory was to pass by, he puts *Moses* into the hole of a Rock; and truly the graves of the Saints are but as the holes of the Rock til the Glory of Gods Justice passes by a people.

An apt
simile.

Use. 3.
let not pa-
rents cause
their chil-
dren to wish
they had
never been
born.
By neglect
of good e-
ducation.

And thirdly, If the sins of Parents may be the cause of such things to Children as better they had not been born, let those that have Children take heed that they lay not up such wrath for an Inheritance for their Children, as that their Children afterwards should even wish they never had been born of such Parents, especially if Parents be careless in the education of their Children not to bring them up in the fear of the Lord, hereafter their Children may curse the time that ever they were born of them, and say, Oh! that I rather had been of the off-spring of Vipers, or the generation of Dragons than that I had come of such Parents, Oh! that my Mother had had a miscarrying womb, or that she never had had breasts to give me suck. Certainly this will be the voice of many Children against their Parents one day: Look to it that there be never a Father nor Mother in this place that may give cause to their Children thus to wish they had never been born of such Parents. And certainly if the enduring of sorrows and misery in this world may put them into such a condition, what then will sin and being the authors of miseries to others do? Those Children that are abominable and wicked in their lives,

If better
not to be
born in re-
spect of te-
poral cala-
mities;
what then
in respect
of eternal?

and

and are cauſes of miſchief to others, how much cauſe is it that it had been ſaid, that it had been better his Mothers womb had miſcarried : as it was ſaid of Judas, that it had been better that he had never been born : And ſo it may be ſaid of abundance at this day, what abundance of evil are ſome at this day the cauſe of unto others ? What woful diſturbances, diſtractions and calamities do ſome men bring upon a Nation ? had it not been better that their Mothers wombs to have miſcarried, and their breasts not to have given them ſuch ?

eſpecially thoſe who are authors of calamities to others.

As at this day in Eng

And again, What horrible wickedneſs are ſome guilty of ? How many Mothers this day have cauſe to ſay, Oh ! that my womb had miſcarried of ſuch a Child ! Oh that my breasts had never given ſuch a Child ſuck ! Oh that ever one ſhould come out of my womb to do ſo much miſchief, to take up Arms to fight againſt his COUNTRY, to fight againſt the Saints, to bring in Slavery and Tyranny, that ever any out of my womb ſhould have a hand in ſuch a miſchievous way as this is ! Oh ! theſe breasts of mine every time I look upon them, I wiſh they had never given ſuch a one ſuck, for it may be they wil ſuck my blood too. Certainly if ever there were a time to wiſh their wombs had miſcarried, and their breasts never given ſuck, theſe are the times many may do ſo. And this ſeems to have alluſion to that which Chriſt ſaith in Luke 23. 19. *Bleſſed are the wombs that never bear, and the paps that never gave ſuck.* I ſay, concerning many particulars in the Kingdom in this time, it might have been ſaid, Oh ! bleſſed had the womb been that ſuch men were in, had they never been born, and the paps that they ſuckt, that they had never given ſuck. This would not have been an interpretation, but a good prayer, if it could have been foreſeen, if any Prophet could have foreſeen this, that thou ſhouldeſt have been a Child, and he ſhould have been an Actor in ſo much miſchief as hath been done in this Kingdom of late, if any Prophet could have foreſeen this, thou wouldeſt have ſaid Amen to his

Luke, 23. 29.

Note.

his prayer, Lord give this woman a miscarrying womb and dry breasts that she might never have born nor given suck to such an one. It follows.

VER. 15.

All their wickedness is in Gilgal : for there I hated them.

Gilgal.
Chap. 4. 15

WHAT this *Gilgal* was I opened in the 4th Chapter at the 15. Verse, it was a very famous place for many remarkable things: Stones were set up in remembrance of so great a mercy in coming over *Jordan*, and there was the first *Passover* that ever they had, and there they were circumcised, and the Lord said unto *Joshua*, *This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you*, from whence it had the name; they were not circumcised in all that time in the *Wilderness*, from whence it was called *Gilgal*, because the reproach was rolled away; I shewed abundance of mercy to them in *Gilgal*, there they eat the fruit of the Land, and there the reproach was rol'd away, and the monument of my great mercy in bringing them over *Jordan*; but now they have turned this place to the most abominable place in the Country, for because there were such great things done in *Gilgal*, they thought that it was a holy place, and therefore they might justify their superstitious waies, though God afterwards did chuse another place for his Worship, yet they thought to sacrifice and worship in *Gilgal*, they thought it might be justified, because it was a place where such great things were done. Now saith God, I never intended that, all their wickedness is in *Gilgal*.

Expos.

Obs.

Superstitious men are proud to put holiness upon places that have had remarkable things done in them in reference to Religion. This phrase we have had occasion to meet with before, and therefore I pass it.

All

All their wickedneſs.

That is, *Their chief wickedneſs*, as if God ſhould ſay, there is a great deal of wickedneſs among them, there are Murders and Thefts, and abundance of other evils, the breaches of the ſecond Table; but yet above all, their wickedneſs is at *Gilgal*, they think to make uſe of that place where I ſhewed ſo much mercy to them, they think to juſtify their ſuperſtitious worſhip, but I'll have them know that I hate this, *There I hated them* ſaith God, I abhor this that they think to be juſtified by. So that the Notes are.

Expoſ. 1.

Above all ſins, the ſin of Idolatry is that that God looks upon as the great wickedneſs for which he doth hate and abhor a people. Becauſe in that ſin men think by their own waies of worſhip to make God amends for their wicked waies, and preſent their own waies of worſhip, to juſtify themſelves in all other kind of wickedneſs.

Obſ. 1.

And again: *For men to abuſe that wherein God ſhews mercy: For them to take advantage or occaſion by that to turn it into ſin againſt God, this is that which God hates.* For there was much mercy they met withal at *Gilgal*, and they made Gods mercy an occaſion to their wickedneſs. To make that which ſhould engage us to God to be an occaſion of wickedneſs againſt God this is abominable in Gods eyes: As you reade in the Law, that you muſt not ſeath a Kid in his mothers milk; that which is the milk to preſerve the Kid, that muſt not be a means for a ſecond death, to ſeath or boyl it in ſaith God, that's unnatural, and but cruelty; ſo for us to deal with God to take thoſe things that ſhould be a means to engage our hearts further to God to be occaſion of further ſinning againſt God, that's abominable; there ſaith God, *I hated them.*

Exod. 23.
19.

Concerning *Gilgal*. Their Idolatrous Priests told them (as 'tis propable) that that place was a holy place, and ſurely God that had appeared ſo to them there would ac-

Expoſ.

cept of their services in that place rather than any other, and so though God had after chose another place, yet still they doted upon this place, [*Gilgal*] and that which was so famous for Gods Worship became as infamous for superstition and wickedness.

Polanus upon the text compares that Town in Germany, [*Wittenberg*] to this *Gilgal*. Those places where the Lord hath been more gracious to people, the Devil seeks to corrupt those places most of all; as in *Wittenberg* was the beginning of Reformation by the means of Luther, and now (saith he) the Devil hath made it the Theater of divers Heresies, and still makes it more and more; that very place which was a place of Gods mercy to the Country: so here, that place that was the greatest place of mercy, is here the greatest place of wickedness; the Devil envies it so much the more, and all their wickedness is here.

All their wickedness.] That is, the chief wickedness, their Superstition and Idolatry is the chief and the great wickedness that provokes God against a people; not only because of the presumption in it, but because it's an Inlet to all other kind of wickedness. Hence observe:

1. *Where there is false worship in any place all manner of wickedness follows.* And people do most stick unto their superstitious waies more than to any thing, and therefore that's the chief wickedness, yea and they think to satisfie God with those waies for their other sins, *All their wickedness is there.*

A further Note from hence is, *That to sin in face of mercies, where there are the Testimony of Gods abundant mercies, that is very abominable to God.* That's a great aggravation of sin, to sin in the face of the testimonies of the mercies of God, what, where so much mercy, yet here wicked and abominable? Doth God fill thy family, thy chamber, thy closet, thy bed, thy shop with the Testimonies of his mercy? Take heed how thou sinnest there where there are abundant Testimonies of Gods mercy to witness against thee, and to aggravate thy sin.

Wittenbergan ob Reformationis initium per Lutherum Satbanus haeresium Theatrum fecit. Pol. in loc. See Wilkingson against the Familists; print. Lon. 1579. pag. 3. Reporting the like of Colchester in Essex. And in Fox A.D. Mon. 1. edit. p. 606. A. not untruly Obs. 2.

But.

But I find ſome Interpreters, and that not one or two, but many, (and that makes me ſpeak of this Interpretation) that refer this wickedneſs to the caſting off the Government that God had appointed, and the bringing in of a new Government: at *Gilgal* was the place where they would have *Saul* to be their King, and caſt off the Government by Judges that God had appointed among them, *Gilgal* was the place; now this was the ground of all their other obſtinate wickedneſs, and God remembers this a long time after and ſaith, *All their wickedneſs is in Gilgal, and there I hated them.*

From hence the Note is this, *That it's a hateful thing to caſt off the Government that God would have us under, it is hateful to God;* the Jews had both their Civil and Eccleſiaſtical Government by Divine Inſtitution, they were both mixt in one there. And though now we have not our Civil Government by Divine Inſtitution, but it's left to the Creation of man, according as in prudence men in ſeveral Countries ſhall think beſt; but Eccleſiaſtical Government certainly is as much by Divine Inſtitution now, as ever it was, and it muſt be ſo, becauſe it is ſpiritual, and nothing can work in a ſpiritual way upon the inward man but that that is by Divine Inſtitution, therefore whatever the Government be (I will not meddle with the particulars) yet we muſt take heed how we caſt off that which is appointed by God; for that's hateful, there I hated them; we had need therefore ſearch and examin to find what that is, and if we think it be not ſo cleer as their Government was to them, we muſt take ſo much the more pains to examin, and not think it long that there is ſo much time ſpent in ſeeking to find out what the Government ſhould be, do not think it a light matter: many people they think it but a circumſtance, and things that we need not trouble ourſelves ſo much about, and why ſhould there be ſo much time ſpent in ſearching it out; Learn from hence to look upon it as a great matter, as a matter upon which the welfare

Expoſ. 2.
Ar. Mon.
and ſome
Hebr. In-
terpreters.

Obſ. 3.
Civil and
Eccleſiaſtical Go-
vernment
united in
Iſrael.
Civil Go-
vernment
Eccleſiaſtical Govern-
ment

pains muſt
be taken a-
bout it.

As a thing
of great
conſequence.

fare or the evil of a Kingdom doth much depend, for so it was here, saith God, because they cast off the Government that I would have, there I hated them. Thus you may take in both the meanings, both the Testimonies of Gods mercies in *Gilgal* at first, and the place where they cast off my Government and would have another, I hated them there saith God.

Obf. Some
sins pro-
voke God
so hatred.

Again, *There I hated them.*] There are some sins that provoke God to anger, and some to grief, but some to hatred, and that's dreadful when our sins shall provoke hatred, the Lord hates the works of iniquity. This is the great difference between the sins of the Saints and others, the sins of the Saints may anger God, may grieve God, but the sin of others they provoke God to hatred. *I hated them.*

Obf. God
manifests
his displea-
sure in the
places where
we sin.
simile.

Again, *There I hated them.*] (There) Sometimes God manifests his hatred in the very places where men do sin against him. As a mans spirit will rise if he comes to a place where he hath been wronged by any; If you should come into the very place where your children have been murdered, or wives ravished, would not you have your hearts rise with indignation, in this place was my child murdered, in this place was my child ravished; so saith God, every time he looks upon *Gilgal*, Oh! here was this wickedness committed, there I hated them. Hence it is that many guilty consciences dare not go into the place where they have committed sin, *There I hated them.*

It follows.

I will drive them out of my house.

Expos.

They shall remain no longer in a Church-State, they shall remain no longer so to be in my House.

Those who under the colour of being under the Church of God; yet live in the waies of wickedness, God will unchurch them even in regard of the outward appearance of a Church.

a Church Eſtate; *I'll drive them out of my Houſe*: It's a dreadful expreſſion this, for a father to take his child or ſervant and drive them out of his houſe notes great indignation; to be driven out of Gods Houſe is a ſore evil, that makes all other evils indeed to be evil, as abiding in Gods Houſe is a great bleſſing, and recompences the want of many outward bleſſings. If any of you that have been ſervants to great men, and ſhould be driven out of their houſes, and eſpecially for your conſcience, yet if God takes you into his Houſe you are well enough, and for that you have a famous Scripture in *Pſal. 52. 8. But I (ſaith David) am like a green Olive tree in the Houſe of God, I truſt in the mercy of God for ever and ever*; Upon what occaſion was this *Pſalm* pen'd? It was when *David* was driven out of the houſe of *Saul* by the occaſion of *Doeg*, there was a *Doeg* that did exaſperate *Saul* againſt him, and *David* was driven from his houſe, ſo he dared not come into it, but what comfort had *David*? But I am like a green Olive tree in the Houſe of God; though I cannot be in *Saul's* houſe, and enjoy the priviledges of his houſe, yet bleſſed be God that I may be in His Houſe, and there thrive and proſper as a green Olive tree.

Pſal. 2. 8.
illustrated.

I will drive them out of my houſe.

God cannot endure wickedneſs in his houſe, neither ſhould we; God accounts it his diſhonor to have wickedneſs and wicked men in his houſe, and ſo ſhould we, as in the Church, ungodly men ſhould be driven out of the houſe of God; we muſt not make Gods houſe an Hogs-ſty, an unclean place for all Swine to come in, but they ſhould be driven out as Chriſt drove out the Buyers and Sellers out of the Temple; yea, and ſo ſhould all Chriſtians drive out of their families wicked and ungodly ſervants: *Pſal. 101. 7. He that worketh deceit ſhall not dwell within my houſe (ſaith David). And he that telleth lyes ſhall not tarry in in his ſight.* It's a diſhonor.

Obſ. God cannot endure wickedneſs in his houſe.

Neither ſhould Chriſtians in their families.

Pſ. 101. 7.

a dishonor for any who make profession of Religion, that though themselves be not scandalous in their own lives, yet there are those in their house that live scandalously, they have as wicked servants in their houses as any; this is a dishonor to Religion: God drives out wickedness out of his house, and do you do so to yours.

And I will love them no more.

Expos.

By [*Love*] here is meant, the communication of outward good things, for that carnal hearts account to be the only love of God: Indeed if they may have but outward prosperity here in this world, they make that an argument of Gods love unto them: Well (saith God) though you have had many such kind of arguments of my love, (such fruits of my love) yet *I will love you no more*, I will take away all those priviledges and good things that you have enjoyed, There are priviledges and good things that come from no other love but that which may be taken away; Oh! let not us be satisfied with those, let us be satisfied with nothing else but that which comes from everlasting love. You may have your outward estates, you may have comely Bodies, Health, Strength, Success in your labors, comings-in plentifully, yea, you may have Church Priviledges, and yet all this not come from the everlasting love of God, that can never be taken away; these fruits of Gods love may be taken from you, and God may say as concerning all these, *I will love you no more*: but there are fruits of love, the sanctifying Graces of Gods Spirit, the fruits of Electing love, and God can never say of these, *I will love you no more*.

No more.

After many deliverances that this people had in a way of love, God resolves with himself that he will have done with them, he will love them no more, he wil deliver them
no

no more: God may withdraw the ſence of his love from his people for a while, but he manifeſts his love again, the afflictions of the Saints they are but a little cloud that ſoon paſſes over, the Sun ſoon breaks in again upon them, and Love ſhines; but the Sun of the wicked and ungodly ſets, and never riſes again: this is dreadful when a mans ruin, or a peoples ruin is thus ſeal'd by God, whatever mercies you have had heretofore, yet now there's an end of all, Adieu mercie, adieu love, I had gracious manifeſtations of them once to my ſoul; but they are now gon, I muſt never enjoy them more, now God hath changed his adminiſtrations towards me, I muſt expect nothing but wrath, the hand of his ſore diſpleaſure to cauſe ruin, and to be ſunk everlaſtingly: Oh! let thy provocations of God be no more, do not thou add unto them; I have dealt falſly with God, dallied and trifled with the Lord, many times promiſing fair, but when I was deliver'd then have dealt wickedly with thee; but no more Lord: Oh! take heed, if thou add'ſt any more unto thy wickedneſs leſt that this dreadful ſentence be pronounc'd in Heaven againſt thee, *I will love thee no more.* The words are in the Original, *I will add no more;* I have done enough already, I will do good to this wretched creature no more; my Goodneſs and Mercy hath had their turn, *no more;* Spirit ſtrive with them, no more; Ordinances, no more do them any good; Mercy meddle no more with them, *I will love them no more.*

Original
reading.

All their Princes are revolters.

This is a very ſtrange expreſſion: What all? Yes, even from Jeroboam to Hoſhea's time, every one of them, the Princes of Iſrael were wicked men, for two hundred and fifty yeers ſpace, in all ſucceſſions every one were naught, and falſe, and ungodly, all were revolters. It's an elegant Paranomaſia that in the Original, *Princes revolters*, the words have a greater elegancy in the Original than in our

English;

שׂוֹרְתֵי
לְיִשְׂרָאֵל
לְכָל
לְיִשְׂרָאֵל

o. e. d. v. v. q. u. i. p. e. r. s. u. a. d. e. r. i. [u. t. c. r. e. d. a. m.] n. o. n. p. o. s. s. u. n. t.
 English; the Seventy they turn it by this word, *Men that could not be perswaded*, they were all of them men that could not be perswaded, they were set upon their own way, their own ends, and would have their own politick fetches, and let Prophets, let any of the Godly come to shew them the mind of God, they were resolved in their way, they would not be perswaded, but were wilful, and they would have this way, and whatever came of it they would venture their lives and the loss of their Kingdom but they would have it, in a desperate way they were set upon their wills, come of it what would they would go on in this way.

Obf. 1. *Men that are great in Power and Authority they think it a dishonor to them to be perswaded to alter their minds, but rather will go on desperately to the ruin of themselves, and the ruin of their Kingdoms, rather than they will hearken to counsel; they were all of them men that would not be perswaded: and Luther upon the place hath this expreffion (saith he) Being lift up in the pride of their hearts by their Power that they had, they would be above the Word it's self, they think it much to have their hearts come under the Authority of the Word. This is the wickedness of mens hearts when they grow great they swell above the Word of God.*

They are all wicked, all of them revoltors.

Expof.
Princes when they come first to the crown promise fair.
 Some of them there were that made some kind of shew at their first coming in, when they came first to the Crown they gave great hopes (some of them) that they would have better times than they had before, and that things that were evil in former Princes Reigns would now be reformed, but within a while they went all the same way; you know *Jehu*, and so some others went in a fair way at first, but they all turned to be revoltors; from whence our Notes are: First, *See what CREATURE ENGAGEMENTS are; see what engagements will work in the hearts of men when they are engaged in their honors, and in their preferments*

Obf. 1.

ments, in their great places of Dignities and Powers, and Profits and Gain, ſee what they will do : evil Princes being engaged and afraid of loſing their power ; if any ſhould go to *Jeruſalem* to worſhip, they all went in one ſteam, not one of them was taken off from their great Engagements ; indeed many in ſmaller matters may be taken off to God, but if it come to a great matter, then none ; perhaps ſome poor Miniſters that had little livings (you know) heretofore, they would be taken off, and ſee the Truths of God, and the ſinfulneſs of Ceremonies ; but where did your Deans, and Biſhops ? where did any of the Prelates that had great Engagements ? they would never ſee the Truth that now almoſt every body ſees, their great Engagements hindered them. And ſo the great Engagements of Princes hindered them though the Truth was clear enough.

Secondly ; This is brought as the cauſe of the evil of the People, they were all wicked, no marvel though the people were ſo, *According to peoples intereſts ſo they are, as they ſee thoſe above them go that have power over them, that way people will go.* Ephraim was wicked, becauſe all their Princes were revolters. Thoſe that are in places of power they drive the people along before them, for (I ſay) God hath little honor in the world but as it ſutes in mens Intereſts, according as they have Intereſt this way or that way.

Obſ. 2

Uſe.
Let Ma-
giſtrates
conſider.

Thirdly, *They are all Revolters.*

From this the Note is this, *That Princes though they ſhould be uſed with reverence, yet muſt not be flattered, but their ſins muſt be ſhewed plainly unto them, [They are all Revolters,] though they can hardly bear it.* Touch the Mountains and they will ſmoke, touch the great men, reprove but them, and preſently the heat of their wrath riſes and they ſmoke even with indignation. But yet thoſe that are faithful about them they ſhould truſt God with their places, and eſtates, and with their lives ; Oh had we but thoſe about Princes that would deal faithfully and ſhew to them how far the

Obſ. 3.

Pſal. 104.
32. refle-
cted on.

Servants to
Great men
exhort.

guilt of blood may be upon them, and the evil of it might be upon them, Certainly it would be otherwise with us than it is at this day: had we but *Latimers* and *Deerings* (that worthy Preacher in Queen Elizabeths time) It's said of *Latimer*, that sending a Book to King *Henry* the Eighth, he writes in the first Page of it, *Whoremongers and Adulterers God will Judg*: and *Deering* in his Sermons even before the Queen speaking of disorders of the times, and these and these things are thus and thus, and you sit still and do nothing: and again, even before her face, preaching to her, (saith he) may we not well say with the Prophet, *It's the mercy of the Lord that we are not consumed, seeing there is so much disobedience both in Subjects, and in Prince*: Certainly much good might come had we men of such Spirits as heretofore have been. *All their Princes are Revolters.*

Latimers
and Deer-
lings spi-
rit.

Note.

Obs. 4.

Fourthly, *When Princes one after another are wicked, there's little hope of good then to a people.* The Saints under the persecution of one they groan and cry to God, but another comes and oppresses them more. We had need therefore pray for those in high places, for Princes, for it concerns much the people, as we shall see more after. It follows.

VER. 16.

Ephraim is smitten, their root is dried up, they shall bear no fruit.

EPHRAIM is smitten.] God had threatned Ephraim long before, but now he is smitten; not threatned only, but smitten.

The phrase

Observe this Note, (the manner of the phrase is as if he were smitten from Heaven by a Thunder-bolt, in a dreadful manner God himself smote him) observe this, *God will not alwaies forbear sinners, at last God smote*; he threatens a long time, but he smote at last: God may be a long time bending his Bow, and making his Arrows ready, and pre-

Observ.

paring

paring the instruments of death, but at length he smote; and when he smote he smote terribly. How sad is the condition of a wicked man who hath had many warnings, and much patience of God hath been shewed towards him, and at length this is the news that one neighbor tells another, Oh! such a man is smitten of God, the wrath of God hath pursued and hath overtaken such a man, the fearful stroke of God is upon him, and this certainly will be the news of wicked impenitent sinners, secure sinners, this will be the news that will be told of you, such a one is smitten; Oh! and what sad reports are there at this day in all Countries about us, even through the world, what's the news throughout the world almost but this (the Christian world) *England* is smitten, the Lord hath smote them? the Lord hath smote us with a dreadful stroke and still he continues smiting of us. That Scripture in *Isa. 5. 25.* is made good upon us this day, *The anger of the Lord is kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them,* (mark what follows) *The Hills did tremble* (Oh that our hearts did) *and their carcases were torn in the midst of the streets:* (and so it hath been with us:) *And for all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still:* And thus it is with us. And the principal cause that is there given of such woful smiting, it is as you may observe in the 20. and 23. verses, the crossness of mens spirits in turning things quite contrary and cross to that which God would have them. As thus, *They call evil good, and good evil: they put darkness for light, and light for darkness; bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter: Justifying the wicked, and taking away the righteousness of the righteous.* This is the cause of this smiting, and never was there such perverseness in the hearts of men to turn things quite cross, to cry out of *Truth* for *Falsehood*, to cry out of the *Waies of Christ* as the *Waies of Sedition*, and the great troublers of the Kingdom, to cry out of the *Saints* that are for peace, as the great *Stirrers up* of the Kingdom, and to ju-

*Isa. 5. 25.**V. 20. 23.**Crossness of mens spirits.**in Engl.*

*Malignants
escape:
Faithful
men are
discounte-
nanced.
1 King.
14. 15.*

stifie the *wicked* in many places; What favor hath many Malignants? and those that have most appeared in the Cause of God, how are they discountenanced? This is the Cause why God would smite them, and why their Carcasses should be torn in the very streets. The Lord hath smitten us this day as he did the people in *1 Kings*, 14. 15. *The Lord shall smite Israel as a reed is shaken in the water,* (and then it follows after) *he shall root them out of the good Land.* So it's here, *Ephraim is smitten, and his root dried up.* The Lord this day hath smote us as a reed is shaken to and fro, that which men cried up at first, they cry down again presently after, and forward for a little while, and then quite the other way again, and wavering and unconstant in all their waies, and know not indeed what they would have; thus the Lord hath smote us, yea the Lord hath smitten us so as he hath fetcht blood, fetcht blood, yea, the Lord hath smitten us by those that should protect us, and that's a sore smiting, to smite us by the hand of such as should protect us; that threatening that is denounc'd in *Zach. 11. 6.* Oh how is it made good upon us this day, saith the text there, *I will no more pity the inhabitants of the Land saith the Lord; but lo, I will deliver the men every one into his neighbors hand, and into the hand of his King, and they shall smite the Land; and out of their hand I will not deliver them.* It's a very strange Scripture, I know not the like in all the Book of God, God threatens to smite this people, and how? Oh! this is a sore smiting, I will deliver every one into his neighbors hand, and they shall smite one another, and I will deliver every one into the hand of his King. Why is it so great an evil to be delivered into the hand of our neighbor, and into the hand of our King? truly at this time it seems it was: Oh! the Lord smites us this day, he smites us sorely by giving us up to smite one another. We smite one another with the tongue, in *Jer. 18. 18.* *Come, let us smite with the tongue, say they.* When was there ever such smiting with the tongue as there is now? yea, even good

*Zach. 11.
6.*

*Scarce pa-
reliev'd in
Scripture
in respect
of the Na-
tion,*

Ier. 18. 18

good men ſmite one another : There was a time when the Prophet deſir'd to be ſmitten by the Righteous, in *Pſal. 141. 5.* *Let the Righteous ſmite me (ſaith the Prophet) it ſhall be as Oyl to my head;* but now we may juſtly cry out to God, Lord, let not the righteous ſmite me; the very ſmiting of the righteous is a ſorer ſmiting this day than the ſmiting of enemies, to ſmite with the tongue, yea and worſe too, in *Iſa. 58. 4.* *In the day of their faſt, they ſmite with the fiſt, and ſmite with the pen, that is a ſorer ſmiting ſometimes than ſmiting with the ſword.* And ſmite with the ſword too, for Brother is againſt Brother, and Father is againſt Child, and Child againſt Father, and this is a forerunner of Gods ſmiting the earth with a Curſe, in *Malac. 4. 5, 6.* verſes, the very cloſe of the old Teſtament, there *Eliab* is propheſied to come, and to turn the hearts of the Fathers to the Children, and the hearts of the Children to the Fathers, leſt (ſaith the text) *the Lord come and ſmite the earth with a Curſe.* Oh! that *Eliab* might come among us otherwiſe? What can be expected but the Lords ſmiting the Land with a moſt dreadful Curſe? When was Fathers againſt Children, and Children againſt Fathers as now, and that in matters of Controverſie? It was wont to be a Proverbial ſpeech among the Jews, when they had any knotty Controverſie that they could not untie, *When Elias ſhall come, then we ſhall come to know the meaning of this.* We may ſay this day, well, becauſe we ſee what Controverſies there are and what differences of this & the other way & judgment, the Lord Chriſt (whoſe forerunner *Elias* was to be) he will come ere long, and he will open all things to us, the Meſſias will come again and tell us all, and ſaſiſſie us in all our difficulties, and put an end to all our diſputes; But for the preſent the Lord ſmites us, not only by the ſword, but he ſmites us as he ſmote the men of *Sodom*, with blindneſs, and that Curſe threatned in *Deut. 28. 28.* is even upon us, *The Lord (ſaith the text there) ſhall ſmite thee with madneſs, and blindneſs, and aſtoniſhment of heart, and thou ſhalt grope as*

Pſ. 131. 5
inverted.

Iſa. 58. 4.
Smiting
with the
Pen worſe
than with
the Sword.
Malac. 4.
5, 6.

Quum ve-
nerit Elias

England
ſmitten as
Sodom.
D. ut. 28.
28.

noon daies, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not proffer in thy waies, and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled ever more, and no man shall save thee. Oh my Brethren! how is this fulfilled at this day? with what blindness, and madness, and astonishment are the people of the Land smote? If it were not the smiting of God to smite men with blindness, it's impossible but they should see what should be done in such a time as this is, and you are only oppressed: Indeed now almost every man in the Kingdom cries of being oppressed and spoiled ever more.

And that
evidently
by God
himself.

Our opres-
sions not
removed,
but rene-
wed.

We thought that when spoylers and oppressors were amongst us that we were safe and well when it was over, Oh! but it is renewed again, and then come the spoylers the second time, and the third time, spoyling ever more, and this is the fruit of Gods smiting men with blindness, and madness: And yet who is it that returns to him that smites him? But Lord, seeing thou art a smiting, Oh! that thou wouldest smite once more, smite these rocks of ours, these hearts of ours, if thou wilt but smite there, that might free us from other strokes, that there might gush out tears of repentance, smite there that we may every man smite upon his thigh; Oh! that we may smite upon our own hearts. But it follows:

Their Princes are Revolters: and Ephraim is smitten.

Only a word more from the connexion of these two, *All their Princes are revolters: and Ephraim is smitten.*

Obler.

From thence the Note is, *If God leaves those who have the chief Government in their hands to revolt, the people then will be smitten.* Oh! pray much for them, and let not them that have the chief Government in their hand think much that people enquire into their way, and that they use all means that they can to keep them upright; for if they should revolt they would not only undo themselves, but undo us, it concerns us to enquire how it is with them, and to be sol-
licitous

licitous about them, and they muſt not bid us that are beneath them to let them alone and meddle with our own buſineſs, and follow that which concerns us, certainly it concerns us much what they do: were it indeed that if they miſcarried they only ſhould be ſmitten, then we had leſs to do to look after them; but if they revolt we are ſmitten: If a child ſhould in all humility and reverence beſeech his father to leave off ſuch and ſuch a ſinful way, or to take heed of it that he be not carried by ſuch and ſuch counſels, if his father ſhould ſay, Meddle you with what you have to do: the child might well answer, Oh father! I hear in the Word of God, that God doth viſit the ſins of the fathers upon the children, and I may feel of theſe ſins of yours when you are dead and gone, therefore I beſeech you, Oh father, conſider what you do? (I ſay) the ſame might be answered if we ſhould Petition and labor with our Governors in all humility to take heed of any evil Counſel, and if they ſhould bid us look to what concerns us, we may well answer, We have heard in the Word that when the Princes are Revolters, the People are ſmitten, that if Governors ſhould any way revolt from any former Proteſtations the People is like to be ſmitten; it is we know from the revolting of many of our Lords and Members of that High Court that we have been ſmitten ſo as we have been, Now many of them have revolted to the Enemy? and theſe that have been the Members of that Court, (I ſay) their revolting have been the cauſe of ſuch a fore ſmiting which we have had.

An ape
ſimile.

Applied to
the preſent
Parliament

Further: *It cannot free Ephraim from being ſmitten*; ſmitten becauſe their Governors are evil, they cannot excuſe their ſin by that: Perhaps the People would plead thus; What could we do? we could not help it, thoſe that were in Government they enjoyn ſuch things, and if we did not obey them they would undo us, we were not able to bear their ſmiting of us, therefore we were forced to yield; Oh! better endure the ſmiting of man than the ſmiting of God,

Obſ. 2.
Compulſion
of Authority
does
not excuſe
ſin.

it is a fearful thing to fall into the Hand of the Living God.

Obf. 3.

2 Chron.

26.20.

observed.

The apprehension of Gods hand smiting is that which should humble the hearts of sinners very much. It's a notable Scripture which you have in 2 Chron. 26. 20. of Uzziah, that when he saw that he was smitten, though he were stout and proud before, yet when he was smitten he made hast out of the Temple. It's no longer standing out, for the Lord hath smitten. So when we apprehend God smiting, it is no standing out against the great God, but we had need make hast to reform. And thus much for this expression. It follows.

Their Root is dried up.

Expos.

But though we be smitten we hope we may grow, we may lose our leaves and some of our boughs, but we hope that we shall spring again: perhaps these are the vain apprehensions of some men, but never look to making their peace with God, no saith God, I'll not only smite to take off your leaves and branches, but I will smite the very root, that shall be dried up: There's difference between the pruning and lopping off a tree, and the drying up of the root of it, there may be help so long as the root remains alive. I will never trouble my self any further (saith God) with them, I have already smote off their boughs, and that doth no good, I will dry up the very root now. It's a great aggravation of Gods smiting when he smites at the root, every smiting it is not a drying up of the root, it is the base unbelief of our hearts, the discontentedness, forwardness, sullenness of our vile spirits that makes us thus to conclude almost upon every stroke of God, that he intends our undoing, if he doth but smite us so as a few leaves are but shaken off, or that our branches are but shak'd, we are presently ready to conclude that God intends to blast us, and to dry up the very root, and ruin us utterly; how often

*Disordered
passions
causes sad-
der conclu-
sions than
needs of
times.*

ten in our unbelief, when by temptations we have been shaken and the leaves of our comforts have been shaken off, (our enlargements) and the like, how often we conclude, Oh ! the Lord is coming againſt me, and he will certainly blaſt all, all that I ſeem to have, the very root of all my hopes and comforts will preſently be blaſted, Oh ! this (I ſay) is the evil of our hearts, it comes from our fullenneſs, frowardneſs, and unbelief ever ſo to conclude, it may be God intends only to prune thee and to take away ſuperfluities, that ſo the ſap may go down more at the root, that thou maieſt have more Humility, and Self denial, and Faith, that thou maieſt have more exerciſe of the Root-Graces, Humility, Patience, Faith, Self-denial, and God perhaps ſmites only to make the ſap go down more to the Root-Graces, though thou concludeſt that he will dry up the Root preſently. In this ſmiting wherewithal the Lord hath ſmote us we hope that he intends not to dry up the root, but we may ſay of it as in *Iſa. 27. Hath he ſmitten him as he ſmote thoſe that ſmote him ? or is he ſlain according to the ſlaughter of them that are ſlain by him ?* The godly party may ſuffer much, but I make no queſtion but the ungodly party hath ſuffered as much, and by this ſhall the iniquity of *Jacob* be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away his ſin, and in the 4. verſe God tells us, that fury is not in him, God is ſain to make an Apologie to his people when he is a ſmiting, though I ſmite you, yet not ſo as thoſe that ſmite you, but in the day of the Eaſt wind I ſtay the rough wind, and fury is not in me, but by this ſhall the iniquity of *Jacob* be purged: and this is all the fruit thereof to take away his ſin.

Enlargements.

Iſa. 27. 7.

Verſ. 4.

But God hath his time to dry up the roots of ſinners, and the roots of Nations. 1. God dries up the roots of many that have made fair profeſſion in former times, they have had no other Root but only Parts, and common Gifts, and Morality raiſed, and this Root is dried up; this day many fair and glorious Profeſſors, how are they this day blaſted!

Obl. 1. Of Perſons.

sapless, dry spirits, and useles in the world in this time when there is so much service required of them? And by being dried up, what are they but prepared for the fire? Old withered, sapless Professors (I say) whose root is dried up they are fitted for nothing but the fire, they are like those in *Jude*, corrupt trees, trees that are corrupt in the Autumn: Thus it is with many Professors at the time when God expects fruit, now they are sapless, now they are corrupt fruit, they are dried up by the root, and what are they fitted for but for the fire?

Iude, 12. And then God hath his time to dry up the root of Nations, in *Isa. 5. 24.* Now we might seek to understand what the Root of a Nation is, but I think we need not in this place, because it is sufficient only for the Metaphor, to shew that God doth not only afflict a Nation, but intends the utter ruin and destruction.

Yet a word or two thus.

Quest. What was the root of Ephraim?

Answ. The Covenant that God made with him; that was his Root in the first place. And when God intends to break his Covenant with them, (because they broke theirs) then he dries up the Root; and therefore in the next Chapter you shall find that God charges them with dealing falsely in making a Covenant.

Hos. 10. 4. And then, The Godly among a People are as the Root of that People, in *Isa. 6. 13.* But yet it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten: as a Teyle Tree, and as an Oak, whose substance is in them when they cast their leaver: so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof. So here, the holy seed shall be the substance of it. The holy seed in a Kingdom is as the root and substance of it; and yet such is the wretchedness of men, that what do they do but in stirring against them, they would root out the very Root of the Nation.

And the vigor and power of the fundamental Laws in a Kingdom is as the Root of it, from whence flourishes all their outward Peace and Comfort.

And

And the bleſſing of God upon the wiſdom and faithfulness of thoſe that are put into place, that's as the Root of the good of a Nation, in theſe things eſpecially conſiſts the Roots of a Nation. We hope that God will not wholly dry up our Root, only let us take heed of this; though there be indeed a difference between the Covenant of God with the Nation of the *Jews*, and any Covenant that God makes with any Nation at this day, yet if we be falſe in the Covenant that we make with God, this may root us out; let us look to it that the vigor and power of the Fundamental Laws of the Kingdom be maintained, and that the godly be maintained, let us not ſet our ſelves to root out them, for in ſo doing we do but ſeek to root out our ſelves, and let us pray that the bleſſing of God may abide upon thoſe that are in place of power, and while theſe things continue we may hope that the Lord intends, though he may ſcatter and break us in pieces, yet that there may a Root ſtay, and there is little queſtion (I think we may make) that God will preſerve our Root howſoever; and that there will be a Root of the Saints that ſhall flouriſh till Jeſus Chriſt comes again, *The Root of the Righteous ſhall not be moved*; though the Righteous may be lopt from all their outward comforts, yet their Root muſt not be moved, that lies deeper than my Creature-power is able to reach unto. But there is a Root, Oh! that God would dry up that, a Root that the Scripture ſpeaks of, a Root of Bitterneſs, that brings forth Gall and Wormwood, Oh! what bitter fruit doth that Root bring forth! Oh! that God would dry up that root. It follows.

*The Root
of the right-
eous,
Pro. 12.3*

*A Root of
Bitterneſs
Deut. 29.
18.*

They ſhall bear no fruit.

They would bring forth fruit to themſelves, and ſeeing they would bring forth no other fruit but to themſelves, they ſhall bring forth no fruit (ſaith God.) How happy were we if God would ſay the root of bitterneſs (that we

Expoſ.

spcak of) as he said of the Fig-tree, Never fruit grow on it more, Oh! that that Curse of God might be upon the root of bitterness that there is in the hearts of many, that God would say, we shall never hear the evil Language, the evil Speeches of People, and the bitter expressions as heretofore we have done.

Yea though they bring forth, yet will I slay even the beloved fruit of their Womb.

Expos.

מחמך

Honest
women ve-
ry desirous
of children
Harlots
not so.

Which are
an Allegory
of a true
Preacher
& a false.

The use of
the word
translated
beloved.

The word translated *Beloved fruit*, it is *Desirable*, the *Desires of their womb*; Children are the desires of the womb, that is, women are very strong in their desires after them, *Give me children or else I die* (saith Rachel :) Indeed Harlots are not, they care only for their lust, and would have no fruit of their womb: It's an excellent Emblem for the expression of the vanity of many Preachers that care for nothing but to satisfy their lusts, and shew their wit and parts, but care not for any fruit at all, care not for beget any children to God; like Harlots they desire not the fruit of the womb, but Wives that are faithful to their Husbands, they do desire it. And the same word that is here for *desires*, and translated *beloved*, it is likewise in other Scriptures translated *beloved*, that in *Dan. 9. 23. Oh man, greatly beloved: Oh man of desires.* And so in *Dan. 10.* where the Angel saith, *greatly beloved*, it is a man of desire. And so in *Prov. 31. 2. What, my son! and what, the son of my womb! and what, the son of my vows!* You may see how *Solomon's* Mother speaks with a great deal of affection, *Oh my Son! the Son of my Womb, and the Son of my Desires.* But indeed the word signifies properly, *the Son of my Vows*, Oh! I made Vows to God, if God would give thee me, and since I have given thee up to God, and by Vows dedicated thee to God, what, the Son of my Vows! Women therefore they should look upon their children as the children of their Vows, and shew forth their love unto them in the

the right way that God would have them. It is a ſtrange place that we have in *Titus*, where aged women are commanded to teach the young women to love their husbands, and to love their children; it is a ſtrange thing that a mother muſt be taught to love her children; thy child is the beloved fruit of thy womb, but yet thou muſt be taught by God, taught by his People, taught by his Word to love thy children, to love them in a right and holy way; take heed of loving them ſo as to provoke God to take them from you, take heed that they be not ſlain for your ſakes; many Mothers have ſlain the fruit of their womb by loving them too much. Do not honor your children above God as *Ely* did, when you look upon their natural comelineſs conſider they have that in them, and that by your means that except they have another birth will make them objects of Gods eternal hatred, they are the beloved fruit of your wombs, and you look upon them and ſee them ſweet babes and very comely, yea, but think withal that you are the cauſe to bring them into that that if they have not another birth, though they be objects of your mirth by being born to you, yet they will be objects of Gods hatred by being born in *ſin* by you; you may look upon them as objects of your *delight*, but God may look upon them as thoſe that he hath appointed to ſlay, Alas thoſe poor ſweet babes, what hurt have they done? God ſees enough in them that in his Juſtice he may ſlay them. But in this that he ſaith he will ſlay the *beloved fruit* of their womb, or the *deſirable fruit*, take but this one Note :

If Gods Honor, and his Ordinances, and his Saints that are dear to him, be not dear to you, even the very fruit of your womb ſhall not be regarded by him; That's the ſcope of the threatening: ſaith he; Oh here's a people that my Honor, my Ordinances, my Saints are not dear to them, therefore even the *deſirable* things of their womb, the very *beloved fruit* of their womb, that that goes more to their hearts than any thing in the world, that that is the deereſt to them I will ſlay

Tit. 2. 4.
illustrated.

Mothers
ſond Love
ſlaies their
children.

A meditation
for
Parents,

Obſ.

slay them in mine anger. If you would have what's deer to you be deer to God, let that that is deer to God be deer to you.

And then it follows in the last Verse.

VER. 17.

My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him; and they shall be wanderers among the Nations.

Expos. **M**Y God] Not their God, but *my God*. There's much to be observed from hence.

Note. First, The Prophets constancy. They forsook God generally, the ten Tribes generally went away and forsook God, but the Prophet still keeps close to God.

Obs. 1. *Let all the world do what they will and forsake God and seek other comforts where they will, but still (saith a faithful soul) God shall be my God.* Hosea he lived in wicked times, generally all the ten Tribes went away from God, but still *my God*, my soul shall keep close to God, I have chosen the LORD to be mine, and I have found that Soul-satisfying good in Him, that he shall be mine for ever, here will I rest for ever; I have chosen the way of Gods true Worship, I will not sutemy self with the common way of Worship where I live, but I will chuse God to be my God whatsoever the world doth.

Obs. 2. But secondly, this is the comfort of a gracious heart, *In ill times when others forsake God, yet one that hath a gracious heart, can have God to be his God*: Yea, and especially when times of trouble comes, when sore evils are ready to be upon the people generally, yet here's the comfort of a gracious heart, *My God*, blessed be God for that Interest I have in Him: they may take away my House, my Estate, my Means, but they cannot take away *my God*, I have Interest yet in Cod, I have Interest still in that God that they cannot take from me. This was the comfort of *Micah*, in Chap. 7.

Chap. 7. there he deſcribes the evil of the times wherein he lived, Verſe 2. *The good man is perished out of the earth, and there is none upright among men; they all lie in wait for blood, they hunt every man his brother with a net.* And then in the 4. verſ. *The best of them is a bryar, the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge.* And then the 5. verſ. *Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom.* But then in the 7. verſe, *Therefore I will look unto the LORD, I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me.* Oh my brethren! there may come times ere long that the knowledge of God, interest in God may be worth ten thousand thousand worlds unto us.

But in the third place: *It is no presumption for one, or for a few to challenge a special interest in God, in way of distinction from the multitude, and from the generality.* So it is here: How singular was *Hosea* at this time? This people might think him to be very presumptuous; What, as if no body had interest in God but he, Is not God our God as well as his? He is bold to speak this in way of distinction: You may forsake God and His Worship, but I have cleaved to God, He is my God. When multitudes and generality of men depart from God, yet for two or three, or a few that cleave to the true Worship of God, they may challenge God to be their God when he is none of the God of the multitude. In 1 *Job*. 5. 17. you may see how singular *John* was there: *We know that we are of God: and the whole World lieth in wickedness.* How could the World take such an expression? What are you? a few poor people: and yet we know (saith he) that we are of God: and the whole World lieth in wickedness. What are you more than others? Yes, *John* knew, and would not be discouraged to affirm, that the World did lie in wickedness: and yet we know we are of God.

Let not men be offended at the fewness of those that keep the Truth, and the multitude of those that forsake it. I remember

Micah, 7.
2. 4. 5. 7.

Obſ. 3.

1 *Job*. 5.
17.

Uls.

Plutarch. remember *Plutarch* relates in the life of *Phocion* the *Athenian*, that upon a time there was an Oracle of *Apollo Delphias* read before the people, which did say, That although all the people did agree, yet there was one man amongst them that dissented from them : now the people began to startle at this ; But *Phocion* stepping forth before them all bid them never seek further for the man, for it was he that liked none of all their doings ; and yet *Phocion* at length gained as much respect from them as ever any man did, and they chose him (I think) forty times to be Pretor for all that. And so let never so many go on in a way that thou canst not see light in thy conscience for, keep to thy principles, only examin them, (so far the respect we do owe to others must lead us) that if there be a greater party go one way than another, we should call things into the more nearer scrutiny, we should think we may possibly be rather in an error than they, and we ought to give all due reverence to the judgments of more men, and more learned and wise than our selves, but still after all, praying to God to shew us his mind, and searching our own hearts to see whether there be no particular Engagement, and after all endeavors to find out the Truth, And yet then if God doth perswade your consciences after all means used, we should not be discouraged because the greater part go the other way, but keep to that which our consciences tell us is the right. And thus it was with *Hosea*, though they went generally another way, yet he could claim a particular interest in God.

And then another point.

My God will cast them away.

Obs. It is a dreadful thing for wicked men to have such as have interest in God to declare against them. God rejection of them, *My God will cast them away.* Those who have interest in God, who know Gods mind, and that such a
God

God as he is cannot have communion with ſuch people. Thus you know it was with *Iſa.* about the 57. and latter end, *There is no peace to the wicked, ſaith my God.* He puts the emphasis there, he ſaith not, there is no peace to the wicked, ſaith God, but ſaith *my* God. Oh! when thoſe (*Iſa.* 57. 21) that have an intereſt in God, when ſuch as keep cloſe Communion with God, and thereby comes to be acquainted much with Gods mind, when they ſhall declare concerning you, do not ſlight it, it is a great matter then when they ſhall ſay, there is no peace; If any of them ſhould ſay: If I know any thing of the mind of God, If I have any Intereſt in God certainly there can be no peace to thee in ſuch a way as thou art in, take heed of the ſlighting of the very ſuſpicion of men that are godly, and humble: It is true, many that may make very great profeſſion of Religion, they may be bold to ſuſpect and to cenſure others, that it may be are better than themſelves, but if I ſee one that walks humbly, ſtrict in his way, holy, and heavenly, and ſelf-denying in other things, if ſuch a man ſhould but have any ſuſpicion of my condition, I had need look to it, it ſhould daunt my heart to have ſuch a Chriſtian look upon me but with a ſuſpicious eye, becauſe ſuch a one is much acquainted with God and his Way, and therefore take heed of ſlighting ſuch a one.

My God will caſt them away, with violence and with anger, as a man takes his ſtubborn child or ſervant, and thruſts them out of his houſe. Explic.

When men are violent in wickedneſs, they muſt expect that God will be as violent with them in the waies of his Judgments: and for that we have a notable Scripture in *Lament.* 2. 6. *He hath violently taken away his Tabernacle.* They abuſed that Ordinance of God, abuſed his Tabernacle, and he hath violently taken away his Tabernacle. Oh! unworthy wretched people, that ſhould enjoy mine Ordinances ſo, and abuſe them; he hath violently taken away, he comes in an anger: As you ſhall ſee a man or woman when their ſimile.

P P paſſion

passion is raised they will run and snatch away such a thing from another.

Use.
Psal. 2.

Isa. 5.

Isa. 30.

Take heed of being violent in the waies of sin, you will cast the Cords away, you will cast away the Truths, as you had it before in *Isa. 5.* so you cast away the Truths of God, and his Cords away; take heed thou beest not a cast-away thy self, those that are so full of casting away Gods Truths, it's just with God that God should cast them away, as a man casts away a loathsome thing; as those are described in *Isa. 30.* *That cast away their Idols as a menstruous cloth, and saith, Get thee hence:* And you perhaps cast away the Truths of God as loathsome now, but the Lord will cast thee away as a filthy and loathsome thing.

They shall be cast away: but why? *Because they did not hearken unto him.* This is a notable Sentence. Saith Luther upon the place, *This (He shall cast them away, because they have not hearkned to him)* is a notable sentence, and worthy to be written upon all our walls; for indeed there is much in it, they would hearken to such and such, and to the rules of their policy, and to their own ends, but not to God. And that's the special point from hence: *That in matters of Gods Worship we must hearken to God,* and the not hearkning to God is that which provokes God with indignation to cast away a people: perhaps other duties we may know by the light of nature; but when we come to matters of Worship, there God must be hearkned to, and not any else; God expects that his creature should hearken to him in what he saith, we should be all as the servant was with his ear boared; Christ himself had his ear boared, he would hearken to what his Father said, therefore the Psalm saith, *Mine ear hath been boared:* Christ was as a Servant with his ear boared, to note, that he would have his ear at the command of his Father. And who, or what are you that you should have your ears free? In *Isa. 28. 23.* mark what several expressions we have about calling to hearken. *Give ye ear, and hear my voice, hearken, and bear my speech.* In one little

Hæc notabilis est sententia, & digna quæ in omnibus parietibus scribatur.
Luther.
Obs. 2.

Exod. 21. 6
illustrated,
by Ps. 40. 6

Isa 28. 23
noted.

littleſe verſe there's theſe four: *Give ye ear*; there's *hear*; there's *hearken*; there's *bear*; Oh! God expects that we ſhould have a hearing ear; and that's the way for wiſdom: in 1 Kings, 3. 9. *Solomon* praies, *Give thy ſervant an underſtanding heart*, but in the Hebrew it is, a *hearing heart*, and ſo it is turned, That I may have a *hearing heart*, ſo as I may be able to judg thy People. Thoſe men and women that have not a hearing heart, they have not an underſtanding heart, and the not hearkening to God, Oh! it is that which comes from the pride of heart: in Jer. 13. 15. *Give ear, be not proud, for the Lord hath ſpoken*; there is no ſuch pride as the turning away our ears from hearkening to God, and turning away our ear from the Law of God is that which makes God turn away his ear from hearing our prayers; it is an evident ſign of deſtruction that is a coming: in 2 Chron. 25. 16. mark what the Prophet ſaith to *Amaziah*, *I know that God hath determined to deſtroy thee; becauſe thou haſt done this, and haſt not hearkened unto my Counſel*. Doeſt thou come to the Word and not hearken to the Counſel of God in his Word? It is an evident ſign that God intends to deſtroy thee. Oh hear! hear and your ſouls ſhall live, your ſouls ſhall live. Indeed here lies the ground of all the evil almoſt in thoſe that are profeſſors of Religion, *The not hearkening to the Truth*; I ſuppoſe thoſe that make profeſſion of Religion if they have enlightened conſciences they dare not ſin againſt a known Truth; but now here's the evil of thy heart, look to that; thou ſaiest, If I knew it were a Truth I would not go againſt it: yea but the corruption of thy heart makes thee unwilling to hearken to the Truth, the corruption of mens hearts makes them that they would fain have ſuch a thing not to be a Truth. I appeal to you, have you never felt ſome corruptions ſtirring this way, that when you are engaged another way, and you ſee that if you ſhould be taken off from that, a great deal of eaſe and liberty, and outward comforts would be gone, and upon this your hearts are

1 King. 3.
9.

A hearing
Heart.

Pride the
root of not
bearing.

Jer. 13. 15

Deſtruction
the fruit of
it, whereof
alſo it is a
ſign.

2 Chron.

25. 16.

very loth that that should be true, and therefore you are not willing to hearken, to hearken with a cleer heart, so as to be willing to entertain the Truth, if it doth prove to be a truth; that soul that shall be willing to retain every truth, and be willing to let the truth prevail what ever it be, that's a sign of a gracious heart; but the lusts of mens hearts do hinder them from hearkening, and they are loth to hearken to those Truths that come neereſt to them; but when a man or woman shall be able in the preſence of God upon examination of his or her heart, to ſay, Oh Lord, let thy Truth prevail, thou knoweſt that I am willing to hearken to every Truth of Thine, though it ſhould pluck away all my outward comforts, I would fain know thy Truth, and I would know the ſtriſteſt Truths, what Truths they are that moſt concern thy Glory, and thy Worſhip in the beſt manner, whatever becomes of my Credit or eſtate, Lord, let thy Truth prevail in my heart: (I ſay) here's a gracious heart that will thus hearken to God and his Truth: But they have uncircumciſed ears, they cannot hear (ſaith *Jeremiah*;) ſo, through the corruption that is in mens ſpirits they cannot hearken to thoſe things that ſeem to make againſt them.

But the laſt words of all here, is the threatning.

They ſhall be wanderers among the Nations.

Obſ. 1.

Eccleſ. 6. 9

It is a judgment to have an unſetled ſpirit wandring up and down, and can ſettle to nothing, ſometimes in this place, ſometimes in that; ſometimes in this way, and ſometimes in another; this is a judgment of God. *Solomon* hath ſuch an expreſſion, *The ſight of the eyes is better than the wandring of the deſires*: the wandring of mens appetites and deſires, work a great deal of vexation to them.

Again, obſerve that, *Thoſe who are caſt away out of Gods houſe, they can have no reſt*, they go about like the unclean ſpirit, ſeeking reſt, but can find none. *Pſal. 139. Here will I reſt*

I reſt for ever: The Church of God and his Ordinances are Gods reſt, and ſhould be the reſt of the hearts of his people, and they are indeed the reſt of the hearts of thoſe that are gracious; but alas poor ſoul! who art wandering from God, Whicher goeſt thou? where indeed will be thy reſt? It was the Curſe of God upon *Cain*, to be a wanderer up and down upon the face of the earth.

But you will ſay, *May not men be wanderers, (that is) may not they be caſt out of their Habitations and Countries; and wander up and down, and yet not be caſt off from God?*

It's true, we read in *Heb. 11.* that the Chriſtians wandered up and down in Sheep ſkins, and Goats ſkins, whom the world was not worthy of: But that was in a way of perſecution for God, and for his Truth; it was not becauſe they would not hearken, but becauſe they would hearken; and though thou ſhouldeſt be forc'd to wander from thy Brethren, and the ſweet Habitation that thou haſt, and thy Friends, perhaps thou art ſain to wander up & down even for thy life, yea, but canſt thou ſay, Yet I hope I am not one of Gods caſt-aways? It's one of Gods Epithites that he glories in, *That he will gather the out-caſts of Iſrael*; Man hath caſt me out, yea, but I bleſs God, I carry a good Conſcience with me; and that man or woman needs not be troubled with wandering, that can carry a good Conſcience with them; you are caſt out from your Friends, yea, but ſtill thou haſt the Bird that ſings in thy boſome: Canſt thou ſay, I have not caſt away thy Commandements, Lord? Indeed if a mans conſcience tel him, that he hath caſt away Gods Commandements, then if he wanders it is dreadful to him: What, though thou art wandering from thy houſe, from thy outward comforts, but not from Gods Commandements; *Caſt me not out of thy preſence, ſaith David*; though thou beſt from thy friends, yet not from God preſence: here it is, *I will caſt them out among the Nations.* It was a Curſe in *Pſal. 44. 11.* *Thou haſt ſcattered us among the Heathen*: It was a great Judgment of God, to be ſcattered.

in the Hebrew it is emphatical
 מהלך
 נפש
 then the walking ſoul, ſo the Bible marg. Queſt.

Anſw.
Heb. 11.

Pſal. 44. 11.
 11. obſerv.

*This curse
of wan-
dring upon
the Jewes
to this day.*

scattered among the Nations, for they were a people that were separated from the Nations, and not to be reckoned among the Nations, and Gods peculiar Treasure. There were these three expressions, not only to be wandering among the Nations, not only among Strangers, but among Heathens, among Blasphemers, this must needs be a heavy and sore judgment, to be cast among Idolaters; This Curse is upon the Jews to this very day, how are they wanderers among the Nations?

Obler.

Let us learn from hence, *To prize the communion of Saints*, let us learn what a blessing it is to live among our own People, especially among the Saints, in the enjoyment of Gods Ordinances, let us make use of it now lest God teach us what it is by casting us away and making us to wander among the wicked and ungodly, then your consciences will fly in your faces and tell you, Oh! what times we once had, and what sweet communion had we? but we began to neglect the prize that God put into our hand, Oh! if we were where once we were, we would meet often, and pray, and confer, and we would labor to edifie one another in our most holy faith, and warm one anothers spirits, not spending all our time in wrangling and jangling, Oh! but now those times are gone, and we are cast away and are wandering up and down among wicked and ungodly people. Truly there hath not been a time in many years when the communion of the Saints hath been so little improved as at this day, we now wander (as it were) among our selves, and little converse one with another, what should we do living together? Just were it with God to bring this Judgment upon us, that we should wander among wicked people here and there, and that we should not come to see the face of a Saint to have converse or communion with them. Thus we have finished this Ninth Chapter.

*Communion
of Saints
neglected
in Engl.
more than
formerly.
The drin-
ger of it.*



C H A P. X.

V E R S. I.

Israel is an empty Vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself: according to the multitude of his fruit, he hath encreased the Altars: according to the goodness of his Land, they have made goodly Images.



HERE Gualter makes the beginning of Hosea's seventh Sermon. The Argument is like unto the former, upbraiding and threatening. Hosea had to deal with tough and stought spirits, and therefore he still strikes with sharp rebukes and severe threats.

Israel is an empty Vine.

The Church is often in Scripture compared to a Vine, in Psal. 80. 8. *Thou hast brought a Vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the Heathen and planted it. And in that known place* pf. 80. 8.
Isa. 5. 1. Now will I sing unto my well beloved a song of my be- Isa. 5. 1.
loved,

loved, touching his Vinyard.

Obf. 1. The Church is compared to a Vine.

Reaf. 1.

First, There's no plant hath a more unpromising outside than the Vine hath, the outside of it, how mean is it? looks as if it were weathered, rugged, grissled, weak, and hollow the stalk of it: and this is the Church, the outside of it is very unpromising, little beauty and comeliness; as Christ himself had little beauty and excellency in his outside.

2.

Plin. lib.

14. 4.

one Culeus

is 20. Amphora, and

1. Amphora

is a Tanka

yard of 18

Gallons,

so that the

sum is a-

bout 1800

Gallons.

But yet secondly, The Vine is the most fruitful plant that grows out of the earth; *Pliny* (that great Naturalist) tells of very strange fruitfulness of some kind of Vines, in his 14. Book, and 4. Chapter, he tells of ten Culei (that's his word) that an Acre of Vines brought forth in a year, which comes to a matter of eighteen hundred gallons: nay in the 1. Chapter of his 14. Book, he tells of one stock, one single Vine, that was planted by *Livia* the Empress, that yeelded an hundred and eight gallons of good Wine yearly. The Vine is a very fruitful thing, though unpromising in the outside. And what fruit indeed is there brought forth to God in the world but by his Churches? and God expects much fruitfulness among his people; how ever, as you shall hear, they are charged with being empty.

Thirdly, No plant requires so great care as the Vine; What a deal of do is there in dressing the Vine and underpropping of it, and pruning of it, looking to it continually? and the Lord hath the greatest care of his people, of his Church: himself accounts it no dishonor to be the Husbandman, as he is said to be in *John* 15. and in *Isa.* 27. 3. you have a most admirable expression of Gods taking care of his Church, as his Vine. *I the Lord do keep it: I will water it every moment, lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day. I will keep it and I will water it, and every moment lest any hurt it, I will keep it (again) night and day. And this is the Vinyard that he speaks of in the beginning of this*

this Chapter, and it was the Vinyard that brought out red Wine, the beſt ſort of Wine. Thoſe that bring forth the beſt ſort of Wine ſhall have the beſt of Gods care and charge and protection over them.

Fourthly, The Vine it is the moſt depending creature in the world, it is not able to under-prop its ſelf, but muſt have props more than other Plants, and therefore Nature hath given unto it ſtrings by which it catches hold upon any thing next it: And ſo the Church, the Church is weak in its ſelf, and is the moſt depending thing in the world, depends upon its props that God affords unto it; you have an excellent place to ſet out that in *Iſa. 27. 2, 3.* ver. there the holy Ghoſt ſpeaks of a Vinyard of red Wine, and in the 4. verſe, *Fury is not in me*; which ſhews that there ſhould come a kind of great ſtorm and tempeſt, but he would not have his People to be diſcouraged. *Fury is not in me.* And then in the 5. verſe, *Let him take hold of my ſtrength, that he may make peace with me, and he ſhall make his peace with me.* Let him take hold of my ſtrength; that is, ſpeaking to his Church as a Vine, in the time when my fury is abroad, yet do you like the Vine, which catches hold upon a pole, and there under props its ſelf, ſo let him take hold of my power, let him act faith upon my power in time of ſtorms and tempeſts and he ſhall make peace, though he hath never ſo much trouble abroad in the world with others, yet he may, he ſhall have peace with me. That's the nature of the Vine to catch hold upon that which is next it, and eſpecially in time of ſtorms, when the ſtrongest Oaks are rent in pieces, yet the Vine catching hold upon the props it hath, reſts there.

*the ſtrings
in the Vine*

Iſa. 27. 2, 3

explained.

Fifthly, If it be not fruitful, it is the moſt unprofitableſt thing in the world. I ſuppoſe you know that place in *Ezek. 15. 2.* *What is the Vine-tree more than any tree, or than a branch which is among the trees of the Forreſt? Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work, or will men take a pin of it to hang any veſſel thereon? Behold, it ſhall be caſt into the fire for ſewel; It*

Ezek. 15. 2

is not meet for any work, the Vine is meet for nothing, not to make a pin if it be not fruitful. And no people in the world are so unprofitable as Professors of Religion if they bring not forth the fruit of godliness, and the world may be rid of them better than any people else if they bring not forth their fruit unto God.

And then further in the sixth place, A Vine is the most spreading plant that is, that spreads larger than other plants, and fills a great deal of room with the spreading of the branches of it, and so you have the Promise of the Church in *Isa. 27. 6.* *Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.*

And then lastly, The Vine is the most tender, soft plant, and it is the Emblem of peace, the sitting under our Vines, it is to set forth Peace. And so the People of God they should be of tender soft spirits, not like the Bramble, nor the Thorn full of pricks, if we sit under Thorns and Brambles we may be prick'd with them; but sitting under the Vine there is nothing but sweetness and delightfulness there: *Israel is a Vine*; yea but he is an empty Vine. The word in the Original is a Participle, an emptying Vine, and yet the sense will come much to one, an *Empty Vine*, or an *Emptying Vine*: that is, Though there be much cost bestowed upon *Ephraim*, so as he might be fruitful, yet he makes himself empty.

This shews how he comes to be an empty Vine; not because Gods mercy is scant to him, but he makes himself so by his sin, what juyce & moisture he hath he doth empty it forth into other things, and so is empty.

Israel was a Vine full of clusters, refreshing God himself, as you heard in the ninth Chapter, that he was to the Lord as Grapes in the Wilderness, as a Vine that did bring forth Grapes in the Wilderness, that was so sweet to a weary and thirsty traveller. *Israel* was once such a one, yea, but now he is come to be an empty Vine, though he grows in the Vinyard of God, and not in the Wilderness.

Empty.]

Empty] and no mervail, for as you have heard in the latter end of the former Chapter, he would not hearken to the Lord, he would not hear the Word of the Lord, the Lord threatens to caſt him away, becauſe he hearkened not to him, from whence *Luther* hath this Note, *The Word is like a fruitful rain, there can no true fruit be without the Word*, thoſe that will not hearken to the Word, no mervail though they be empty, it is the Word that makes fruitful, it is that that is as the fruitful rain: Thoſe that leave and forſake the Word, obſerve them how fruitleſs they are, what empty ſpirits they have; many that heretofore were forward in hearing the Word, and loved it, the Word was delightful to them, Oh! then they were fruitful; but ſince they have been taken off from the Word, converſe with them now and you ſhall find their ſpirits empty, and their lives empty; and there's no men in the world ſo empty as thoſe that would worſhip God in another way than the Word appoints, men that would think to worſhip God after their own fancies, and waies, Oh! how empty are they in all their Worſhip they tender up to God?

Chap 9.
the laſt V.

Verbū tan-
quam fructu-
cunda plu-
via; ſine
verbo, nulli
poſſunt ve-
ri fructus.
Luther.

Wil-wor-
ſhippers
empty.

But the main Note and Obſervation is, *That emptineſs in thoſe that profeſs themſelves to be Gods People, is a very great evil*. Oh! it is a great charge upon thoſe that grow in Gods Vinyard, that profeſs themſelves to be Gods, to be charged with this, *That they are empty, an empty Vine*. When we would ſpeak of a man contemptuouſly, as one that hath no natural or aquiſite excellency in him, we ſay ſuch a one is an empty, or a ſlight fellow; and that's the meaning of the word that you have in *Mat. 5. 22. Whoſoever calls his Brother, Racha, ſhall be in danger of the counſel*; the word *Racha*, it is empty, it is as much as if he ſhould call his Brother an empty fellow; for that's the ſignification of the word *Empty*. And in *Jam. 2. 20. Knoweſt thou not, O vain man, that faith without works is dead*? The words are, Oh empty man, knoweſt thou not, O empty man, that faith without

Obſ. 1.

Mat. 5. 22
Racha ex-
plained.

Jam. 2. 20
ſayē.

*Some Anti-
nomians.*

*vacuum non
datur.*

Reasons.

works are dead? There's many that keeps a great deal of noise of Faith, and of Gods free-Grace, and yet are extreame empty men and understand little of the true excellency of the Covenant of Grace; *Knowest thou not, O empty man, that Faith without Works is dead?* Speak as much as thou wilt of Faith and Gods Grace, yet if there be no Works, thou art an empty man. Nature will not endure emptiness; some of the Philosophers have said, that the world would rather be dissolved than there should be any vacuity; creatures will move contrary to their nature rather than they will suffer a vacuity. Certainly an emptiness in the souls of Gods people, it is the worst emptiness that is in the world: For,

First, It is the most unnatural thing for a Vine to be empty.

And secondly, For the Saints to be empty, they are a dishonor to their Root that they do profess they are upon: Christ he hath all the fulness of the God-head in him; *And of his Fulness we are to receive Grace for Grace*: To grow upon him, upon such a root and yet to be empty, Oh! what a dishonor is this to Jesus Christ!

Thirdly, This frustrates the Lord of all the care, and cost, and charge that he is about, if thou wert another plant that grew in the wilderness it were not much, but a Vine, and one in Gods Vinyard, and yet fruitless, Oh this is a sore evil! Fourthly, There's no blessing upon thy soul if thou beest an empty Vine in *Isa. 65. 8. As the new Wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it.* If there be Wine in the cluster, then a blessing is found in it, but otherwise destroy it. No blessing is found in those that are of empty spirits.

Fifthly, If there be grace, it is the Divine Nature its self, and cannot that bear fruit? It is an evil in a Vine to have but a little moisture, to shoot forth in leaves and bear no fruit; yea but what is that unto Grace that is the Divine Nature its self, the most glorious thing in the world?

Therefore

Therefore for Chriſtians to be without fruit is an exceeding great evil; Doeſt thou know what fruit is? One gracious action that comes from the ſap of the Root that is in Chriſt, it is more worth than Heaven and Earth; any one gracious Act (I ſay) it is more worth than Heaven and Earth, Oh the fruit of the Saints is fruit to eternity, and to be without this fruit muſt needs be a great evil, thoſe that are empty and without fruit (you know) they are ſaid in *John 15.* to be but *as* branches, not branches, they that bear no fruit are ſaid to be but *as* a branch, and then ſuch a branch as muſt be cut off, God will cut them off, cut off thoſe branches, he will cut them off from their profeſſion and ſuffer them to fall ſo as they ſhall not continue in their eternal profeſſion, and they ſhall wither, he will curſe their very common gifts that they have.

Iob. 15. 6.
as a branch.
explained.

6. Oh! how many that heretofore ſeemed to flouriſh, yet but leaves, and bearing no fruit, now their leaves are gon too, and their common gifts are taken away from them, and not only withered, but ſhall be caſt away, caſt away from God, and out of the hearts of the Saints, and men ſhall gather them, the men of the world they ſhall catch them, and ſo they ſhall joyn with them, and they ſhall make uſe of them, and they ſhall be caſt into the fire and burnt; caſt into the fire, not for a fiery tryal, but caſt into the fire that they may be burned: theſe are the threatnings againſt thoſe that bear no fruit. It is the glory of Gods People, to be filled with the fruits of Righteouſneſs, *Phil. 1. 11.* To be filled with the Spirit, *Ephes. 5. 18.* Yea, to be filled with all the fulneſs of God, *Ephes. 3. 19.* So it is expected of the Saints, that they ſhould be filled with all the fulneſs of God: Oh! how contrary is this to emptying? And ſurely ſh'd the Saints ſhould be with fruit, becauſe they are the very fulneſs of Chriſt, the fulneſs of him that fills all in all: In *Ephes. 1.* laſt verſe, the Church is ſaid, to be the fulneſs of Jeſus Chriſt himſelf; And ſhall the Church be an empty Vine, when as it is the very fulneſs of Him that fills all in all?

Phil. 1. 11
Eph. 5. 18
Cap. 3. 19

Cap. 1. ult.

7. An empty spirit is fit for the Devil to come to possess; *Mat. 12. 24.* he found his place empty, and then he comes in: where the Devil sees an empty spirit, there's a fit place for him to come. It is an evil thing for you to grow up on Gods ground and to cumber it, to cumber any part of Gods ground; it may be if thou wert gon, there might be another in thy family, or place, that might bring forth fruit to God; but thou hinderest, God might have more Rent (as I may so say) for all his possessions in the world, the great Rent is, the fruit that the Church brings forth; *Cant. 8. 11.* in *Cant. 8. 11.* it is said, that *Solomon* let out his Vineyard, and it brought him in a thousand pieces of Silver for the fruit of it. And God he lets out his Vinyard, and his Rent (I say) it is the fruit that the Saints bring forth to him; What glory hath God in the world, if those that profess themselves to be his people should be empty?

8. God doth not let us sit under empty Vines; our Vines they have bin fruitful Vines, shall we then be empty Vines our selves?

9. The Lord hath justly struck this Vine here in *England*, and our Vine bleeds; it bleeds, and is in danger to bleed to death, and what though it doth, it hath brought forth little fruit, and therefore it's just with God that he should let this Vine even bleed now to death.

10. According to the greatness of the opportunities that any man hath, or any society of men, so is the greatness of the evil of emptiness: Oh! now to be empty, when God puts great opportunities of great service into our hands, now to be empty when God expects great services, Oh! it is the most vile thing of all. Oh my brethren, that we were but sensible of this.

Usc. 1. But if this be an evil thing to be empty, than what is it to bring forth the Grapes of *Sodom*, and the Clusters of *Gomorrhah*? to bring forth the Wine of the Gall of *Asps*, wild Grapes? And yet a great deal of such fruit there hath been brought forth; And truly the fruit that most men have brought

brought forth now, they are wild Grapes at the beſt. If men do any thing, yet they do ſo mingle the vanity of prid, the ſowrenneſs of their own ſpirits, the rigedneſs of their own nature with what they do, that all is but ſowr before God.

Well, To conclude this, about the *emptineſs of the Vine*: Uſe. 2.
Oh! let us prize fruitfulneſs more, and ſay as the Vine Iudg. 9.
that is brought in, in the 9th of Judges, *Shall I leave my Wine which cheereth God and man, and go and reign over you?* Oh ſo, Shall we leave our fruitfulneſs upon any earthly advantage in the world? Let us account it a greater advantage to bring forth much fruit to the glory of God, than to glory in any earthly advantage: No matter what becomes of us, ſo we may be but fruitful; though God dung us, though he caſt all the filth and reproaches in the world upon us, yet if God will make this but cauſe us to be fruitful, it is no great matter.

But further from the manner of the Phraſe.

Israel is a Vine emptying its ſelf.

That is an aggravation of emptineſs when we empty our ſelves, when God is not wanting to us in means, but we are the Cauſe of it. And what is the cauſe of emptineſs, but the emptying out our ſtrength and ſpirits to our luſts and the world? No mervail though we have no fruit for God, and ſtrength in his ſervice, when we let out all to other things.

And the old Latin here turns it, *A leavie vine*. And the *Vitis frondosa* vulg.
Seventy they have it, *A Vine that brings forth goodly branches*: *ivυλλημα-τρεσα.*
And yet it's ſaid here *empty*, that is, all the ſtrength and *bonos habens pal- min. 70.*
juyce of it is let out in the goodlineſs of the branches and
leaves. Oh! ſo, many Profeſſors in theſe daies they empty out all their ſtrength that they have and all their parts meerly into leaves, and have goodly branches, make goodly outward profeſſion, and goodly words they give, and
Worldly Profeſſors.
will

will speak much of Religion, but nothing but leaves, nothing but words all this while:

Plin. lib.

17. cap. 22

*Yong Pro-
fessors should
be kept
down.*

*The bene-
fit of tho-
rough hu-
miliation.*

*How Hu-
miliation
should be
preached.*

Pliny in his 17. Book and 22. Chapter, saith of Vines, that it is fit (at least for two years together after their planting) that they should be cut down to the very ground; that they may not sprout out in leaves, and so to lose their juyce and strength at the root. And truly this is that that hath lost the hopeful beginnings of many yong people in these times, they have presently sprouted out into leaves; for never was there a more hopeful time of yong people than at the beginning of this Parliament, and no greater encouragement was there than from them at that time, (I will not say it is wholly lost,) but Oh! how many of them that began to understand the waies of God, hath let out all their strength in leaves, and contests, and disputes, and wranglings, and strange kind of opinions, and little fruit is come of any thing? Nay, there is little savor at all in their spirits; Oh! how happy had it been if so be that God had kept them down in a work of humiliation to the very ground for a yeer or two together? Now that's a thing that is altogether laid aside, any work of humiliation, but presently they sprout out into leaves. My Brethren, whatsoever may be said, or whatsoever heretofore hath seem'd to be preached [to the contrary] yet certainly if rightly understood hath been but the same things that must of necessity be acknowledged; we do not press Humiliation as the Condition of the Covenant of Grace, we look not at it so, but Humiliation keeps the spirits of men low, and empties them of themselves; and keeps them down, (I say) this is that which would have made them a great deal more fruitful, and they could not have run up as meer leaves, and their strength spent: and so, how many of them are fallen off again, not only to be slight and vain, but to be wicked and ungodly, and quire naught, because they were not kept down low for a while, but God ordering things that they should live in times of liberty, Oh! how luxurious have

have

have they grown that way? When God lets a people grow rank and prunes them not, they quickly grow barren. We had never ſo many rank Chriſtians as we have at this day that grow out in luxurious branches, and they think they have over-topt all, becauſe they can talk more than others do, when as there are ſome poor Chriſtians that grow low to the ground, and when they get a little comfort it is gone away from them preſently, and they walk humbly before God, and no body takes notice of them, but are deſpiſed and contemned, O! theſe will grow and be delightful to the palate of God, when ſuch rank profeſſors as theſe ſhall wither and be caſt out. The pruned Vines bring forth the beſt fruit; and therefore that's obſervable: compare *Iſa. 5.* with the 27. there's a Note very obſervable: In the 5. Chapter, God complains of his Vinyard, that he lookt for Grapes, and they brought forth wild Grapes; but there the Prophet ſpeaks of the time before the Captivity: but in the 27. Chapter there is a Scripture that ſeems to refer to the times after the Captivity, and there the Vinyard of God is ſaid to be a Vinyard of red Wine, and God ſpeaks much unto it what it ſhould be after the time of the Captivity, it ſhould bring forth the beſt kind of Wine, for then God prun'd it; they thought that God would come in a furious manner upon them, no (ſaith he) *Fury is not in me*, but this is all the fruit, *to purge away their ſin*. The Vines that are prun'd bring forth the beſt and the moſt fruit.

But I find other Interpreters upon this text, [*Iſrael is an empty Vine;*] They turn it thus: *Is a ſpoiled Vine*. And Luther refers it to the emptying of the abundance of her riches and proſperity; Indeed theſe two go together, Emptineſs of fruit, and being emptied of our comforts and proſperity, to be ſpoiled: *Iſrael hath ſpoiled her ſelf*, and I have for her ſins let the ſpoilers come among them, and ſo hath emptied her of all her good; even while ſhe enjoyed her outward proſperity, ſhe was emptied of the bleſſing

A dangerous thing for ſong profeſſors to be in times of Liberty.

Low Chriſtians.

Iſa. 5. compared with chap. 27. explained.

Expoſ. 2. Vitis ſpoliata, direpta. Luther.

of God upon her ; but after the Lord emptied her even of all her outward good too.

Obs.

And that's the Note from thence: *That sin will empty a Land of all the blessings God hath bestowed, or empty a family, or person : Sin is an emptying thing, sin empties Lands, and Families, and persons of all their outward comforts, in Isa. 4.*

Isa. 34, 11

Applied to
England.

11. there God threatens the *Line of confusion*, and the *Stones of emptiness for sin*; and Oh ! how hath it emptied many parts of our Land ? how hath sin emptied us ? what empty houses are there in many places ? houses that were wont in every room of them to be fill'd with furniture so brave and glittering, now the Owners come into their houses and look upon the bare walls and see them empty of all the rich furniture that was in them ; Oh ! what empty chests, that were fill'd with such brave cloaths heretofore, now they are broken to pieces, and those places that were fill'd with diet and plenty are now empty ; Barns empty, Purses empty, and Bellies empty, and the Veins of men emptied even of their very blood ; Oh ! how are we a spoiled Vine now at this day ! the Vine that a while since was so delightful to God and man, and so glorious even in the esteem of all round about us, yet Oh now ! now hath the Lord sent his emptiers to empty us ; as in *Nabum. 2.2. The Lord hath turned away the excellency of Jacob, as the excellency of Israel : for the emptiers have emptied them out, and marred their Vine branches.* This text is fulfilled towards many parts of this Kingdom at this day.

Nab. 2.2.

An empty Vine, and brings forth fruit to her self.

This is very strange, *Empty*, and yet bring forth fruit ; If she brings forth fruit, how empty ? Yes, it may very well stand together, she brings forth fruit *to her self*, but she is empty in regard of any fruit she brings forth *to me*, but yet she hath juyce and sap enough, to bring forth fruit *to her self*. Oh ! how many people that are barren to-

wards

Expo.

wards God, and have no abilities to do any thing for God, but when they come to themſelves to do any thing, Oh how active and ſtirring are they? but when you put them upon any duty for God then they are weak and unable, & the like: but if it was in a matter that concern'd themſelves there they have ſpirit enough & to much a great deal; If parents have children that in againſt God, they are not ſenſible at all, but if they do any thing againſt themſelves, Oh! how do their ſpirits riſe, and what rage is there in the family? The truth is, were our hearts as they ſhould be, if we have no ſtrength for God we ſhould have none for our ſelves, yea, we would even reaton to, when as we complain, Oh! that we are weak in our memories, and are not able to reſiſt temptation, and we can do nothing for God, we ſhould take a holy revenge upon our ſelves and ſay, Certainly if I can do nothing for God, I will do nothing for my ſelf neither, If I cannot rejoyce in God I will not rejoyce in my ſelf, and if I cannot take care for God I will not take care for my ſelf; to be barren to God and fruitful to our ſelves, this is a great diſproportion.

Parents.

He bringeth forth fruit to himſelf.

The old Latin is, *even like himſelf*, ſo they turn it, he brings forth fruit *like* to himſelf.

Fructus a-
dequatus
eſt ei.

Obſ.

Men of baſe principles will do baſe things, corrupt hearts will have corrupt waies. An ingenuous ſpirit ſometimes wonders to ſee the waies of many men ſo baſe and vile as they are, men employed in publick employment that have opportunity to do God a great deal of ſervice and when it comes to it, how ſordidly and baſely do they carry themſelves, not caring what becomes of the publick good, of God, and Kingdoms, and Churches, ſo be it they may ſcrape but a little to themſelves? Yea, but do not wonder, it is fruit ſuitable to themſelves, they are men of baſe ſpirits, of baſe corrupt principles, and therefore they bring

Applied to
England.

simile

bring forth fruit like themselves, fruit like the stock that they are on. And so many times children are like their parents, their parents are wicked, and they wicked accordingly. Like an Imp or Branch of such a stock, such are the fruits of many.

But he brings forth fruit to himself.

Expos.

That is, in all that he doth he aims at himself, he hath regard to his own ends, to fetch about his own designs, to bring his own plots to an issue, and all must be subservient to some design that he drives on; Ephraim had many designs and plots that they drove on to make themselves to be rich, and all their strength, and what they were able to do it was for nothing but to be subservient to their own designs: It was said of Judah in their Captivity, in *Zach.* 7. 5, 6. *They did fast, and eat, and drink to themselves; all that was done it was nothing but to themselves; whereas the fruit that they should have brought forth, it should have been to God, and not to themselves: There is a very sweet place for that in Cant, 7. 13. At our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.* Thus should every gracious heart say, and especially he should say so then when God makes your hearts most fruitful with pleasant fruit new and old; Have ye at any time found your hearts most enlarged to God, and you could melt towards God, and had full expressions in the presence of God, and acting of your graces? Take heed now that this pleasant and sweet fruit that you have, that is new from God, and your old experiences that you have had heretofore of Gods goodness, let not corruption reap that that God hath sown, you know it is a Curse that one should sow and another reap; it is God that sows, and shall the flesh reap now? and shall the Devil reap? Oh! let not these sweet fruits, especially the fruit of enlargement in prayer, and the fruit of abilities to do God service in any publick work, Oh! take heed that this be not for your selves, do not you take in the glory to

*Zach. 7.
5, 6.*

Song. 7. 13

*How to use
our enlarg-
ments in
duties.*

your

your ſelves, Oh! but let this fruit be for your beloved; at any time when you find your hearts moſt fruitful, graces moſt fully exerciſed, Oh think thus, I will lay up this for my beloved, I will lay the experiences of the goodneſs of God unto me that may fit me to glorifie God more than heretofore. Oh that's ſweet indeed, when God comes in with fruit, and we lay it up for our beloved; God he is to have all our fruit: you ſhall obſerve in *Cant. 8.* that *Solomon* let out his Vinyard, and mark, in letting out his Vinyard, he muſt have a thouſand pieces of ſilver, and the Husbandmen muſt have two hundred: if God doth afford to us ſome wages for what we do, let not us take the greater part unto our ſelves, let *Solomon* have the thouſand, and let us be contented if we may have two hundred; but ordinarily we take the greater ſum, and return the leſs to God in any fruit: but if you obſerve the 12. verſe, the difference between *Solomons* Vinyard, and *Chriffs* Vinyard, *Solomon* let out his Vinyard, *But my Vinyard, which is mine:* and there is noted this difference, That *Jeſus Chriſt* he takes the care of his own Vinyard, he doth not let it out. And therefore if we have any thing, we muſt not have it ſo much for our wages as free gift, for *Chriſt* doth not let out his Vinyard as *Solomon* did, but he keeps it and dreſſes it himſelf, and therefore it is fit that he ſhould have all the fruit. In *Iſa. 61. 3.* *That they might be called, trees of Righteouſneſs, the Planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.* Such ſhould the Saints be, they ſhould bring forth fruits unto God. And in *Philip. 1. 11.* *Being filled with the fruits of Righteouſneſs, which are by Jeſus Chriſt, unto the glory and praiſe of God.* So ſhould the Saints be, and all the fruits they bear.

But Carnal hearts they aim at themſelves, all that they do they act from a principle within themſelves, and no further, and therefore they cannot go beyond themſelves. It's an argument that all thou doeſt hath a principle not higher than ſelf, when thou acteſt for thy ſelf;

whereas

Song. 8. 11.
12.
illustrated.

Verſ. 12.

Applied.

Iſa 61. 3.
explained.

Phil. 1. 11

Carnal
hearts.

simile
[omnia eo,
unde Ec-
cles. 1.7.]

Phil. 2.21

simile

whereas the principle that the Saints act by, it is the principle of Grace that comes from Heaven, and therefore it carries unto heaven, as the water is carried as high as the Fountain from whence it comes. A selvish heart is a narrow heart; but a gracious heart is a heart enlarged, it enlarges its self to infiniteness; and that's the property of Grace, though it cannot be infinite, yet it is enlarged to infiniteness. Those that work for themselves, the truth is, they lose themselves in their working, and lose all their fruit; it is thy worst self that thou aimest at; there is a kind of selvishness that we may aim at, that is, if we can make God to be our own end, our happiness, as the Saints do, no men in the world do more for themselves than the Saints; yea, but how? because they make more of their own good to be in God than themselves, and they make themselves to be more in God than in themselves, and therefore they have themselves more than any, but they have themselves in God; and no man loses themselves more than those that seek themselves most: *He that will lose his life, shall save it*; those that will aim at themselves, what is that, but a little money, and credit, and esteem of men? Oh poor base, vile heart, hast thou nothing else but this, when as all the Glory that is in God Himself may be thy portion, and thy self may be in it, that if God Himself be happy, thou maiest be happy, because God Himself may come to be thy portion; and is not that a better self to be emptied into God? but therein thou darest not trust God, nor thy self to empty thy self into God, but certainly that is the way to enjoy thy self. *Every man cares for his own* (saith the Apostle,) *but no man for the things of Jesus Christ*. Oh! this selvishness it is vile at all times, but never so vile as at this time, for men to look and aim at themselves, especially for men that are in publick places, now to be selvish is the most abominable and the most foolish thing in the world: for Mariners in the time of a calm then they may look to their several Cabins, but in the time of a storm, then to be painting

painting and making fine their Cabins, how do they deſerve to be *pull'd out by the ears*, and to be caſt into the Sea, that ſhall then be looking to their own Cabins? What is your joy more than the joy of others? and what are you that you muſt have eaſe and content more than others? In ſuch times as theſe are if ever God calls us to be emptied from our ſelves, certainly it is in ſuch times as theſe are.

But the main Note is, *That it's all one to be an empty Chriſtian, and to bring forth fruit to themſelves.* Men think that which they bring forth to themſelves is clear gain; but this is an infinite miſtake, for that which is for thy ſelf is loſt, and that which is for God is gain'd. Profeſſors that are ſelviſh are empty. Many of you complain of emptineſs and unfruitfulneſs, here's the reaſon; You are ſo ſelviſh, that prayer is an empty prayer though never ſo full of words and excellent expreſſions whole end is ſelf, many of the Saints in joyning with ſuch they find their prayers to be ſuch though there be excellent words, becauſe they ſee ſelviſhneſs, men that aim at ſelviſhneſs they had need be cunning to keep it from being ſeen, let ſelf be ſeen in a duty though it be never ſo glorious outwardly yet it is loathſom in the eyes of the very Saints; let but a man appear to affected with himſelf in what he doth, with the tone of his voice, or carriage, or geſture, any thing affected, we know how abominable it is in the eyes of all; And ſo for Sermons, where they are ſelviſh, certainly they are empty things; and ſo I might inſtance in every other thing that men do, the fulneſs of the Spirit in a PRAYER, or SERMON, or any other Duty, it is the ſeeking to lift up the NAME of the Bleſſed GOD in the duty, that's the fulneſs of it; many that are of weak parts, very poor abilities to exerciſe themſelves, yet their hearts being upon God in a duty, Oh! there's a fulneſs in that duty, there's more in that weak expreſſion, in their ſighs and groan: than in all the eloquence of your empty hypocrits, they.

Obl.

Why Profeſſors are empty.

Prayer.

Preaching

what is the fulneſs of a duty.

Weak prayer may be ſtrong.

Colos. 4.
12.
ἐμπλῆσαι
ἐν
τῇ
ἀγαπῇ
τοῦ
Θεοῦ.

Amile.

why Chri-
stians com-
plain of
empty du-
ties.

Try this
experimēt

they not being fill'd with the Will of God : in Colos. 4. 12. it is in your books, *That you may stand compleat in all the Will of God*; but it is, *being fill'd with the will of God*; if thou wouldst have a fulness in what thou doest, a fulness in a Prayer, a fulness in thy Service, in any thing thou doest, be fill'd with the Will of God, and not with thy self-ends. You know empty vessels will break when you set them at the fire, and so will selvish spirits, those that are selvish they quickly grow empty. You that are Merchants, if you have Factors abroad that trade for themselves, they seldom do any great matters for their Masters; I have known Merchants that have been chary of that, for their men to be trading for themselves. And God doth not love to see us trading for our selves, but only as we trade for him, and so account that to be for our selves. And here is an evident demonstration that your selvishness will make you empty for God; how many are there that complain of emptiness? Oh! they cannot do this, and they cannot do that, why? because except they find comfort, and that coming in which they aim at, they have no mind to any duty, they go to prayer, and strive to pray, and they come away and say, Oh! the empty prayers that we make; but what is the reason that you cannot pray as you would? you have no heart to pray, if you would have enlargement in prayer, and present answer of your prayer to get what you would have, Oh! then your hearts would be much let out in prayer, and then you would have a mind to pray; but now though it be your duty to pray, because you shall tender up the worship that a creature owes to God, that is no argument that puts you upon prayer; so it appears that it is selvishness that appears in prayer; but now trie this way, trie this way but to get above your selves once, and be emptied of your selves, and look with a more single eye to God when you go to prayer, let this be the great motive, O Lord, this is that Worship that I as a Creature owe to thee, and the strength of my body and soul

soul is due to thee, and I let out what I can, though I have not enlargements and comforts, though I feel not that I get by duty to my self, yet in obedience to thee, and that I might lift up thy Name, and that I might worship thee, I am resolved to go on in such duties as thou requirest of me; trie but this way, and see whether you will not grow more fruitful in prayer than you did before.

But to pass that, I find that some turn the words thus, (as Pareus) *An empty Vine he is, although he treasure up fruit unto himself:* and so we may understand *emptiness* by that word that I have opened to you, a *spoiled Vine*, he is a spoiled Vine, and he is emptied of all his prosperity, and riches, and glory, that he had, although he seeks to treasure up unto himself. And indeed in such a kind of reading there is a very profitable Note.

Expos. 3.
Pareus

They seek to treasure and enrich themselves, to lay up and provide for themselves now, that they may have store by them come what will come, but this will not do saith God, Israel must be a spoiled empty Vine for all this.

Now that's the Note or Meditation hence, *That when God is spoiling and emptying a Nation, it is a vain thing for men to think to provide for themselves:* This certainly is not the time when God is spoiling and emptying of a Nation, or other parts of the Kingdom for men to have their thoughts now to scrape an estate to themselves and get even from the evils of the times to enrich themselves, by Places and by Offices to enrich themselves, certainly there can be little honor in such an estate, or little comfort: It is the frame and guise of a vile spirit to think of enriching of themselves in such times as these are, certainly it must needs be a very low spirit that minds the enriching of its self in such times as these are; what God may cast men in by extraordinary providence at any time we speak not of that, or by some eminent service; but certainly if it shall prove that God in his mercy shall put an end to such times as these are, when

Obs.

Those that
gaine by
these times
noted for

unless by
some extra-
ordinary
providence
or eminent
service.

men shall prove to be rich after this storm is over, that had not some eminent providence of God to cast it upon them but only in his ordinary way, (I say) whosoever should appear to be rich after these times, it will be little honor to him, or his posterity, it will be the most dishonorable riches that ever was in the world. In *Jer.* 45. 4. saith the *Ler.* 45. 4. Lord to *Baruch* there (he was a good man and yet much over seen in this) *Behold, that which I have built, will I break down, and that which I have planted, will I pluck up, even this whole Land. And seekest thou great things for thy self, seek them not. I am breaking down that which I have built, and* *Act.* 8. 20. *plucking up what I have planted, And dost thou seek great things for thy self? seek them not. In Acts, 8. 20. saith Peter to Symon Magus, Thy money perish with thee. So may I say to many, is this a time for men to treasure to themselves, for men to have their chief care now to gain riches? Oh! it is just with God to say to thee, Thy riches perish with thee; whosoever now will make it his chief care, and think now it is a time of trouble, and now I may gain thus and thus, and it will not appear; (I say) those that shall make this to be their care now, to take advantage of these times to treasure up to themselves, just were it with God to say of them and their riches, Thy money and thy riches perish with thee. It follows.*

Some make advantage of the troubles of the times.

According to the multitude of his fruit, he hath encreased the Altars: according to the goodness of his Land, they have made goodly Images.

Expos.

Here you have the unthankfulness of *Ephraim*; you have had his barrenness, and selfishness, in the two former expressions, and now here his unthankfulness: The Devil he loves to have superstitious and Idolatrous people have good Lands, and good Possessions, that he might be served accordingly; Idolaters serve their Idols according to their Lands and Possessions that they have, According to

to the multitude of his fruit, were the multitude of his Altars. And certainly it is a great reason why all the Papists are so desirous to get *England*, and contribute so much that they might but get into *England*, and get Possession here, for there is no place that they have, where they should have more goodly Images, and more brave things than they should here in *England*, the fruitfulness of this Land is that which makes it to be such a suit to the Antichristian party, and to the Devil, he thinks that might the Popish party get here, Oh! the brave things that I should have here; I began to have fine Altars, but if they should begin to have possession of all the riches in the Land, then Oh what golden Monuments should I have? we began to have great charges to be laid out upon Temples (as they call'd them) but certainly if they should prevail now, you should have them build them up to the very skies, such Pinnacles and glorious things there would be, for the Land is a great deal more fruitful and goodly than it was heretofore, it is improved mightily now; what brave buildings were there in our Fore-fathers time, witness these that we have neer us, *Westminster*, and *Pauls*, and the like. I remember *Latimer* in one of his Sermons before the King tells of his Father which was a man that kept good hospitality, and kept a Horse for the King, and yet the portion that he gave with his Daughter was some five pounds. So I say, if that men were so poor and mean in former times, yet what brave things did superstition do, certainly if the superstitious party should have the possession of the Land there would be brave things done; and therefore the Devil seeing that, strives to bring it into their power.

Latimer

To make Gods blessings to be the Means and the Encrease of our wickedness, that is an abominable thing; To encrease our sins according to the encrease of Gods blessings. How many may be charged with this, That when they were of low and mean estates then God had more service from them, than he hath now they are of higher estates? the higher

Obf.

Applied.

simile. they are raised in their Estates, the lower they are in the Work of God: As it is observed of men that grow very fat, they have so much the less blood. And so the fatter men are in their Estates, many times the less blood and life, and less spirits they have for God.

Real. 1. Certainly this is against the ingenuity of a Christian, to be less for God when he hath most from Him, when his own turn is served, then to turn his back from the Author of all his good, nay it is against a main Christian Principle so to do.

Real. 2. This is a main Christian Principle, that the good of an *A Christian principle.* Estate consists in this; That it gives a large opportunity in proportion to what it is, in proportion to what it is to the service of God. This is a great Christian Principle about Estates; an Estate either greater or lesser, affords either a lesser or greater opportunity for Gods service; upon this principle doth a Christian go in the enjoyment of his Estate. Now to be less for God, or more for that that is evil, the better his Estate is: he goes against that great Christian Maxim.

Real. 3. Yea, and it is against thy Prayers for a Sanctified use of thy ESTATE; Doth God give thee an ESTATE? I hope thou doest seek that this may be Sanctified: now for thee to do less for God, and more for that that is evil by the encrease of thy Estate, thou doest go against a Sanctifying Prayer.

But yet the chief point of all I take to be this: Mark here:

They do ACCORDING: (for there lies the very strength of these words) *ACCORDING* to the multitude of his Fruit, and *ACCORDING* to the goodness of his Land, they have made goodly Images.

*כטוב
לארצו
הטובו
מצבות* There is a great deal of elegancy in the words in the Hebrew, so that from these two expressions, *According*, and *According*, here is the Note: That the love that Idolaters bear to their Idols, it is proportionable to what abilities they have to

shew

ſhew their love; according to the multitude of their Fruit, and according to the goodneſs of the Land. When Idolaters are low they will yet do what they can, and as they grow up they will do more.

Virgil he hath a very fine expreſſion of the Idolater toward his Idol there: *We now make thee but of Marble, but if ſo be our flock doth encrease, and we have as many Lambs as we have Sheep, we will make thee of Gold.*

And thus the true worſhipers of God ſhould do in their ſervice to God, that muſt be proportionable; if they be able to beſtow but Marble for the preſent, if God raiſes their Eſtates, their Marble is to be turned into Gold, and not only in regard of their Eſtates, but of the Gifts, and Means they have, any Abilities; know that that which God will accept of when thou art low in thy Gifts, and Means, and Parts, it will not ſerve turn when God encreaſes thee in thy Gifts, and Means, and Parts. Have you more than others? Account it your ſhame that it ſhould be ſaid of any in the world, That there is ſuch an one that hath leſs mercies than I, and yet God hath more ſervice from him than he hath from me. There is no proportion between many of your encreaſes for God, and your encreaſes from God. Now you muſt look to the proportion to make it as exact as can be, my encreaſe from God, and my encreaſe for God; Oh! be often paralleling theſe two together, and ſee whether one do not come longer than another; and be not at reſt, Oh Chriſtian! except thou canſt make thy ends be even: Thoſe who are rich, muſt be rich in good works. In *1 Tim. 6.* *God giveth us richly; therefore be rich in good works.* It is not enough for a rich man to give ſixpence, or twelvecence for ſome great ſervice; but he is to be rich in good works, and for releeving diſtreſſed ones, and the maintainance of the Goſpel; he is to be rich in good works, and to account their riches to be as well in their good works as in their eſtates; thou haſt ſo much comings in more than others, thou art rich in that; yea, but

Nunc te marmorea pro tempore fecimus, at tu, ſi ſatura genſum pleveris aureus eſto.
Virg. Egl. 7.

1 Tim. 6.

Riches in good works the beſt wealth.

what works goes from thee more than others? art thou rich in that? If we should judg the riches of men and women by their good works, how many rich men would there be accounted very poor? Every man must be service-
 1 Cor. 16. 2. able as God hath blessed them, 1 Cor. 16. 2. Oh! this meditation would be of very great use to those whose estates are blessed by God; think thus, Is there such a distance between what service I do for God, and the service others do, as there is between what I receive from God, and what others receive from God? This Meditation (I say) would be very useful; cast up your accounts thus, Consider what service doth others for God, and what do I? I do as well as others, I but is there as much distance between the service that I do, and the service my poor neighbor doth, as between my estate, and his estate? you perhaps can look upon poor people carrying Tankards, earning dearly ten pence or twelve pence a day, and you have many hundreds a yeer coming in, now is there as much difference? You would be loth to be in such a condition as those are in, Oh! but is there as much difference between the glory that God hath from you, and the glory that God hath from them? It may be some of them when they have been hard at work all day, they get home, and get alone with wife and children and fall a praying, and letting their tears fall down, and blessing God for their bread and drink that they have. And perhaps you in your many hundreds a yeer, and many dishes at your table, are but discontented and froward, Oh! consider, that though God hath raised you above others in estates, yet you are lower than many others in good works; If a man hath encreased his estate more than before you shall quickly see it in his cloaths, and his house shall be finer than before, his furniture shall be finer than before, you shall see his estate raised that way; but can you see it raised in his good works more than before? Oh! that such a man doth more for the service of God than before, more for the relieving of the

1 Cor. 16.
2.

A meditation
for a
rich man.

the woſull neceſſities of his poor Brethren than before : Men are ready if ſo be that men come finer to the Exchange than they did before, they think, What is this man grown richer than he was before ? You ſhould (if God doth raiſe your eſtates) make it appear in being forward with good works, in good works that are chargable, as that men may take notice of your riches by your rich works, rather than your rich cloaths ; except there be a proportion between our plenty and our proſperity, there is no evidence that our proſperity comes in mercy : but if a proportion, then not only an evidence that our proſperitie comes in mercie, but a good addition to the good of our proſperitie. If a Merchant hath his Ship come home and he hath gootten a thouſand pounds by the Voyage, now if God raiſes his heart in a proportionable way to the furtherance of the Goſpel, that is more than ten thouſand pounds ; a man would account that well if he hath gotten ſo much and he could imploy it to get ten times ſo much more, think but thus : Thou haſt gotten in thy eſtate by being proportionable in ſervice for God, thou doeſt encrease the bleſſing ten fold, thou often thinkeſt of the bleſſing of God in giving thee an eſtate more than before, and others think of it, Oh what a bleſſing ſuch a man hath ! yea, but think of the other bleſſing that follows ; but hath God given him or her a heart to do a great deal of ſervice ; The ſecond bleſſing is the great bleſſing indeed. When *David* had reſt, he preſentlie thinks of building God an houſe, and that proportionable in what God had bleſt him in. And that is very obſervable in the difference of *Moses* Altar and *Solomons* Altar ; you know *Moses* he was in times of affliction, and his Altar was five cubits long, and three cubits broad ; and *Solomons* was twenty cubits long, and ten broad ; *Moses* he was low for outwards ; *Solomon* he was high ; therefore *Moses* was five cubits high, and three broad ; and *Solomons* was twenty cubits long, and ten broad : God doth proportion his goodneſs to what we do

David:

Moses's
Altar and
Solomon's.Gods ex-
ample.

for him, why should not we proportion our service with what he doth for us? And therefore when God blesses any of you in your outward estate, it is very good to do somewhat presently, as thus; A man perhaps heretofore had but a little stock, and lived in a Parish where he had but poor and mean preaching, now God raises his estate and he would have his house better, and his cloaths better, why then should not I have better preaching for my soul? And so many other wayes, if God hath blessed you with good preaching, then help your poor neighbors some way or other that the Gospel may be furthered by Gods blessing, and that in a proportionable way.

They make them goodly Images.

There is a very fine elegant paranomasy, *According to their good Lands, so goodly Images.* Now this word that is translated *Goodly*, it signifies also *Beauty*. They that were good Benefactors to their Images, they made their Images *beautiful*: and it is the same word used in the story of *Jezabel* where she is said to tire her head, it is the same word that is here for making goodly Images, she made her self a goodly head. Oh how great a shame is it to do so much for Images, dead Images, & to do so little for the Images of God? Shall Idolaters not care for what cost they bestow upon their dead Images, and shalt thou see a man or woman that carries the Image of God with them in a lively way, shalt thou see them naked, and looking hunger-starved, and looking rufully and miserably, and wilt thou deny to one that hath the Image of God? Every man hath the Image of God in some measure, even in wicked men, but especially in those that are godly there it is a renewed Image, there the very Life of God doth appear, the Divine Nature doth appear: And what a charge will this be, when God shall bring Idolaters at the day of Judgment against thee, that shall bestow so much upon their dead Images,

כְּטוֹב
הַטִּיב

*We should
do for Gods
lively I-
mage as
much as
Idolaters
do for dead
Images,
viz. to all
men:
but especi-
ally to the
Saints.*

images, and thou ſhalt let theſe Images of God to ſuffer want ſo as they do? Certainly ſo long as there is any that hath Gods Image upon them that wants, and wants miſerably too, for thee to think of encreasing thy eſtate now and to be richer than in former times, it muſt needs be very vile.

Goodly Images.

Men are taken with outward ſhews, but a ſpiritual heart, the Ordinances of God though they be never ſo plain in their outſide, Oh they are goodly things! A Spiritual heart ſees a goodlineſs in all Gods Ordinances; Carnal hearts they ſee goodlineſs only in their outward bravery, and outward pomp and glory.

Obſ.

And laſtly, A Note that *Pareus* hath: Here we ſee the vain diſtinction that Papiſts make between their Images and Idols; we ſee here they are charged for making goodly Images. It follows;

Obl.

VER. 2.

Their heart is divided; now ſhall they be found faulty.

MY Brethren, I know that you would be willing enough that I ſhould in ſuch a Point as this is, go beyond an Expository way, ſeeing God hath caſt me upon it; but in regard this Point hath been fully handled in a * Treatiſe already printed, (to which I ſhall refer you) I ſhall paſs it, and proceed to the following words:

* See the ſeveral Exercises

and Sermons which he ſpent (moſt ſeaſonably and excellently) upon this ſubject, are printed in a Treatiſe by themſelves with this Title [IRENICVM: Heart-diviſions opened, &c.] which is to be taken in here, and then that which follows (in the ſubſequent Expoſition) to be annexed.

He shall break down their Altars: he shall spoil their Images.

* In the
Treatise
of Heart-
divisions
printed by
its self.
Expos. 1.
Decollabit
דקל
a דקל
cervix.
Vatabl.

The Divisions of this People, of which you have heard so largely*, were much about the way of Worship, most of them contending for the way of False Worship, against the True; they would have their Images and their Altars honored: but God saith, he would *break them down, and spoil them*; ye keep a stir for them, but you shall not have them: But he will break down their Altars. *Decollabit*, the word comes from a root that signifies a Neck; and so that which you have in your Books translated, *break down*, it is, *break their necks*; he will break the necks of their Altars. Ternovius a learned Interpreter hath a Note upon the place, it hath an allusion (saith he) to that that they were wont to have upon their Altars, they were wont to have *Ornamenta quasi Capitela*, that were (as it were) the heads of their Altars, they were wont to have brave things upon their Altars, and Crowns upon their Altars: I, but saith the Lord, I will break the necks of them all: *He will break down their Altars, and spoil their Images.*

The Notes from thence are briefly these.

Obs. 1.

First, *Though men make never such a stir to maintain that which is evil, God will break it*; they may by their contending and seeking have it a while, but God will break the neck of it at last, it shall come to nothing.

He will break down their Altars.

Expos. 2.

Why, they were convinced before of the evil of them, for so in the former words, *Now shall they be found guilty*, they shall acknowledg themselves guilty in contending so much for them; well, but saith God, though you are convinced of your guiltiness, yet that's not enough, I'll break them down, for otherwise if they do remain, they may be snares unto you afterwards.

From

From whence then the Note is: *That though men be convinced of an evil, yet if the temptation ſhall ſtill abide, they will be ready to fall to it again.* Wherefore to prevent that evil, the temptations are to be taken away as much as we can, (ſaith he) I will take away the temptation; you acknowledged your ſelves guilty when my hand is upon you, but you will fall to it again if the temptation be not taken away.

Obſ. 2.

Thirdly, *Superſtitious Altars and Images are to be taken away.* It's the Magiſtrates work to take away thoſe that are in publick place; but I have met with that heretofore, and I ſhall not need to ſpeak of it now, only for you to meet with any ſuperſtitious Pictures, and Images, you muſt not keep them and ſay, what hurt will theſe do? though they do not hurt now, yet they may do hurt afterwards, you are not to ſell and make advantage of them, but do as God doth, break them down and ſpoil them, that they may not hereafter be ſnares to any others.

Obſ. 3.

Altars & religious Images to be removed from among Chriſtians and brcke: not ſold.

Fourthly, *Thoſe things that we give that reſpect to, which is Gods due, are liable to the ſtroke of God.* They gave reſpect to their Altars, and Images that was due to God, Gods Spirit riſes againſt that, *Ile break them down and ſpoil them ſaith God.* So, whatſoever it be that you give that reſpect to, that God challenges to himſelf, you may expect that God will ſpoil them and break them down. If you give reſpect to your *Eſtates*, that's due to God, you may make an Idol of them, expect that God will break them; yea, to your *Children*, your *Names*, your *Bodies*, *Parts*, whatſoever you have, that you rob God of that reſpect that's due to him, and give it unto them, expect that God will break ſuch things.

Obſ. 4.

Fifthly, *If it be Gods will to break down that which is evil in his Worſhip, let us take heed that we have no hand to ſet it up, that we do not endeavor to ſet up falſe Worſhip, for it's in Gods heart to break it down, let us not ſet up Idols in our hearts neither, or elſe where.*

Obſ. 5

They break down their Altars, and will spoil their Images.

Obs. 6. From whence our Note is this; *We must not break down superstitious and Idolatrous things to make up our own broken estates, for our outward advantage.* We should labor the abolishing of those things, and not our own benefit by them; as certainly many do in breaking down things that are naught and superstitious, they endeavor to make up their broken estates and to gain to themselves that way, and there's all they aim at: but saith God, *They break them down and utterly spoil them;* so should we, and look not to our own advantage.

He will break them down.

Expos. 2. I find some Interpreters render the words thus, *It shall break them down,* and so apply it to their divided hearts. *Ipsam cor;* for so the Pronoun that is translated, *bee,* is relative, and the Antecedent according to the former Exposition is in that last Verse of the former Chapter where he had spoken of God; but according to this Interpretation the Antecedent is: *Their heart is divided: Their hearts,* their very *dissentions,* their *divisions* shall break down their Altars, and spoil their Images. And we may have a hint of a good meditation from thence, If I say the Relative should have that Antecedent, and their hearts being divided should be a means to break down their Altars; then the Note is this:

Obs. 7. *That mens divisions and contentions break the neck of that which they contend for;* especially when men in their contentions, are violent; furious, outrageous, and heady; they do usually by their rage and headiness, and passion in their contentions, break out and spoil the very thing that they would fain maintain, and their party is very little beholding;

ding unto ſuch as ſeek to maintain them in a furious and in an outrageous way, by a ſpirit of contention. You know thoſe furious violent Prelates, Did not they break the neck of their Prelacie meerly by their furie and outrageousneſs? And in any party, thoſe that are the moſt furious and outrageous, do the leaſt ſervice to their party, and many times are the very break-neck of their Party, and of their Cauſe: *It ſhall break them down.* It follows.

The late Prelates.

Furiouſme do the leaſt ſervice.

VER. 3.

For now they ſhall ſay, We have no King.

WHAT, break down our Altars, and ſpoil our Images! no, the King will maintain them againſt you all, let the Prophets ſay what they can and a company of precise fools be againſt them what they will, we have the King will ſtand for that, he will rather loſe his Crown than he will loſe theſe things, he will ſtand for them to his very life, and therefore we do not fear that they ſhall be broken down. No, that will not ſerve your turns (ſaith the Prophet) your King ſhall not be able to help himſelf, much leſs to help you in thoſe ſuperſtitious waies that you would have. For now ſhall they ſay, *We have no King.* They rejoyced and gloried much in their King, they bore themſelves altogether upon their King, no matter for the Prophets; they have the Kings Commandement to do what they do, they can ſhew the Kings broad Seal for what they have done, and they were ſure that they had the Kings heart with them, their King would bear them out in all. They cared not therefore whatſoever they did, ſo be it they have the countenance of their King that he would defend them; and not only defend, but by being zealous and forward for his waies they hop'd to have promotion by him, they did not fear to be queſtioned for any thing, no matter whether they went againſt Law or not, they could ſhelter themſelves under the power and favor of the Kings,

Agraphical Paraphraſe upon the words.

King, the Pomp and Glory of the Court that was a great thing in their eyes, they were bold in their Idolatrous way and oppression, because of the power and greatness of the King; who should controul them in any thing that they did? But now (saith the Prophet) You have had your day, you have had your time that you could thus shelter your selves under the power of the King, and do what you list, and oppress, and rage, and nobody durst meddle with you, because of the power of the King, but now the case is altered.

But now they shall say, We have no King.

Had they no King?

Expos.

*Ac si non
esset, nam
is quam ba-
bemus, non
potest nos
protegere,
quod est
Officium
Regis.
Drus.*

Yes; *Hoshea* was their King, but the meaning is, It's all one as if we had no King, his power is so broken that the truth is, he cannot help us. Saith *Drusius* upon the place; he cannot protect us, which is the property of the King, and therefore it is as if we had none; now they shall say, We have no King; Alas he is not able to save himself, he can do nothing for us, his Pomp, his Power, Bravery is in the dust, he is distressed himself, and we are miserably disappointed of our hopes, we are undone, who can help us now? whither shall we go? what shall we do? our consciences upbraid us now for our bold presumptuous wickedness, Oh! how far were our hearts from the fear of the Lord, we dar'd the God of Heaven and all his Prophets, we boldly ventured upon those waies which we were told, yea which we knew in our very consciences were a provocation to the Lord, we set up our own worship, we pleased our selves, we made our wills to be the rules of all our actions that we did, we took liberty to satisfy our lusts, we mingled our own waies with Gods Ordinances, we subjected Religion to publick ends, we were rигed, we were cruel towards those who differed from us, we upheld the Authority of the King against God and his People, and now God hath justly brought this distressed estate upon us, that now the Kings Power that we trusted so in, is

now

now broken and in a manner gone, Oh! now we ſee we feared not the Lord, we have none to help us now, we now know what it is not to fear the great God, God is above us, and therefore now, what can a King do to us? what could he do for us? Suppose we had him again, Alas! our miſery is beyond his help, ſeeing God is provoked with us, and hath forſaken us, what ſhould a King do for us? And thus in this ſhort Paraphraſe you have the ſcope of the words, as if the People ſhould have ſpoken in this manner.

But now the queſtion is, what times doth this refer to?

Now they ſhall ſay, We have no King &c.

When did they ſay ſo?

The times that this refers to, ſeems to be thoſe that we reade of in 2 King. 17. If you read that Chapter, you ſhall find the times that this hath reference to; then they might well ſay, *We have no King; becauſe we feared not the Lord: What then ſhould a King do to us?*

For the Obſervations from it, the firſt is this:

It's a great evil for a People, not to have the Protection and the Bleſſing that might be enjoyed in the right Government of a King over them: A great evil; And they complain of it as a great evil, and ſo far their complaint is right, That they are now deprived of the Protection and good that otherwiſe they might have had from the right Government of a King over them.

And my Brethren, our condition is even ſuch in regard of the perſonal preſence and protection of a King, in thoſe regards we may almoſt uſe the ſame words as here, and ſay, We have no King among us. And whether it be better for a People to have *no King*, or to have *no Protection* from their King? But that which is contrary to Protection is a Queſtion fitter to be diſcuſſed and determined in a *Parliament* than in a *Pulpit*; and to them I ſhall leave it.

But the Church of God ſhall never have cauſe to make this Complaint, That they have no King; in *Pſal. 29 10,*
11. The Lord ſitteth King for ever. The Lord will give ſtrength
unto

Queſt.
 concerning
 the time
 this prophe-
 ſie refers to
 Anſw.

Obſ. 1.

Applied to
 England.

Pſ 29. 10.
 11.

unto his People; the Lord will bless his People with peace. In
 Psa. 45. 6. Psal. 45. 6. Thy Throne (O God) is for ever and ever: the Scep-
 ter of thy Kingdom is a right Scepter. Psal. 145. 13. Thy King-
 dom is an everlasting Kingdom: and thy Dominion endureth
 throughout all generations. Psal. 149. 2. Let the Children of
 Zion rejoice in their King.

Because we feared not the Lord.

Obf. 2. It is a great evil not to fear the Lord. Fear ye not me
 (saith the Lord) who have placed the sands for the bounds of the
 Sea? It's an evil, and a bitter thing, that the fear of the
 Lord is not in men. For God is a great God, infinitely above
 us, clothed with Majesty and Honor; trembling frames of
 heart becomes his presence: none like unto the Lord; great
 and marvellous are his works; Oh! who would not fear
 him? God hath infinite authority over us, to save, or to
 destroy us, he hath us all at an infinite advantage by the
 least word of his mouth to undo us, his wrath is insup-
 portable: Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?
 who amongst us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? Darest
 thou a vile wretch presume to rebel against any word of
 the Lord, when the next word may sink soul and body in-
 to the bottomless gulf of eternal horror and despair? Who
 art thou that dost not fear the Lord? Dost thou not fear
 the Commanding Word of the Lord, when the next word
 that proceeds out of his mouth may be a destroying word
 to undo body and soul for ever?

Secondly, They said, *We feared not the Lord.*

Obf. 3. And observe: In times of prosperity when men have the fa-
 vour and countenance of great Ones, then there is little fear of God
 among them. Now they said, *We feared not the Lord.* Oh!
 those times when we had the favour and countenance of
 great Men, there was little fear of God among us. So long

as men have any confidence in the Creature, ſo long they ſee no need of God, their hearts are ſwollen with pride, God is not in all their thoughts, they ſay to God, Depart from us, we do not deſire the knowledg of thy Waies. They ſet their hearts and tongues againſt the God of Heaven, they can venture upon any thing then; to tell them it's ſin againſt God, it's a poor dry buſineſs, it's nothing at all with them; how vile and fooliſh are the hearts of wicked men, that the enjoyment of ſuch poor things as they have in the Creature ſhould imbolden their hearts againſt the great God of Heaven and Earth? yet thus it is, men little conſider but even thoſe things that their hearts do ſo much reſt upon, they are abſolutely at the diſpoſe of this God whom their hearts do not fear.

But note, let the Saints of God take this Note with them, *Shall creature confidence take mens hearts off from Gods fear? Then let Gods fear take your hearts off from creature confidence*: Certainly there's a great deal more reſon. Oh! 'tis infinitely irrational that creature confidence ſhould take the heart from Gods fear; but it's infinitely rational that Gods fear ſhould take our hearts off from creature confidence.

*Gods fear
ſhould de-
ſtroy in us
Creature-
confidence.*

Thirdly, Now they ſhall ſay, *We feared not the Lord.*

The taking from a People the protection of, and benefit they might have by Kingly Power, is a puniſhment of the want of the fear of God in them. We have no King, we are deprived of the benefit of the good that we might have, the protection that we might have by Kingly power; it is, becauſe we feared not the Lord; what evil we feel in this let us attribute it to the want of the fear of God in our ſelves, and in the people of the Land. We complain of ^a thoſe that are about the King, and of ^b Her that lies in the Boſom of the King, and of the evil of his own heart in part; but whence

Obſ. 3.

^a Civil
Counſellors
^b Queens.

is it that God hath left him, either to them, or to any evil in his own spirit? The Lord in this punishes the sins of the People: 'tis usual for God to punish the sins of the People in leaving Governors unto evil courses, in 2 Sam. 24. I you have a remarkable Scripture for this, saith the text there, *And the Anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel: and what then? And he moved David against them to say, Go number Israel and Judah.* The Anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them: to what? God lets temptations be before David for to fall in- to that sin that might bring evil upon the people. It was because the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel. It's because that a people fear not God, therefore it is that the Lord leaves Kings, leaves their Governors to those evil waies that they are left unto, and therefore learn we when we hear of any evil that is done by countenance of Kings or any power, learn we to lay our hands upon our own hearts, and say, even this is because we feared not the Lord: how easie had it been with the Lord to have wrought upon his heart, Oh! what prayers hath been sent up unto the Lord for the heart of one man? never since the world began more prayers for the heart of one man; but the Lord hath seem'd even to shut his ears against the prayers of his people, now let us lay our hands upon our hearts, God hath denied our prayers, it is because we have not feared him: now certainly there hath been but little fear of God amongst us, and little fear of the great God is still to this day among us. And that's the third Observation, We have no King because we feared not the Lord.

Obf. 4

And then the Fourth is this, *The times of Gods Wrath and Judgments forces acknowledgment from men that they did not fear God.* When God comes against them in waies of wrath, now they can acknowledg that they feared not God; should the Prophet have come to them before and told them, Oh! you are a wretched vile people, there is no fear of God among you. Why, wherein do not we fear God? as in

Malac.

Malac. 1. they would not be convinced, but, *Now ſhall they ſay, &c.* Now when the wrath of God is upon men, now they ſhall ſay, we ſee now apparently we feared not the Lord. As it's ſaid of *Cardinal Wolfe* when he was in diſtreſs, Oh ſaith he, *Had I but ſerved God as well as I ſerved the King, it would have been otherwiſe with me than it is; but I ſought to pleaſe the King rather than God, and now I am left in this diſtreſſed eſtate.* He would have ſcorned that any ſhould have told him before that he pleaſed the King more than God; but afflictions they will draw forth acknowledgment: for in afflictions God appears dreadful to the ſoul, it is no dallying, and trifling, and putting off then, we ſee we have to deal with an infinite, Glorious, and dreadful God, and in times of affliction now conſcience will brave over men, it will not be quieted and ſtill'd ſo as in the times of proſperity, but it will ſpeak, as we read of *Zebul* in *Judges, 9. 38.* ſaith *Zebul*, *Where now is thy mouth where-with thou ſaideſt, Who is Abimelech?* So ſaith conſcience in times of affliction to wretched creatures, *Where now is that bold and preſumptuous heart of thine? Thou ſcorneſt at fearing and trembling before God, and ſlighteſt his Word, but where now is that proud wretched heart of thine? And in times of afflictions now are mens hearts abaſed and humbled, and therefore now they are ready to ſay, It is, becauſe they feared not the Lord.*

Cardinal Wolfe.

In affliction God appears dreadful.

Judg. 9. 38. Zebul's exprobatō

Mark here, they do not (when they are in afflictions and troubles) ſay, I, we may thank theſe kind of people, there were a company of factious people and they would not yield to any thing, and we may thank them for all this; you hear no ſuch words, Oh no, but it is, *Becauſe we feared not the Lord.*

When the heart is in any degree humbled, it will not put off the cauſe of evils to other men, or other things, but will charge its ſelf as the cauſe of the evils that are upon it. Oh how much better my Brethren were it for us to ſee the want of the fear of God by his Word to us, and his Spirit in us, than by his

Obſ. 5.

wrath against us, or his stroke upon us. Let us every day examine our hearts, How hath the fear of God been in me this day? hath the fear of God acted, and guided me in all my thoughts, counsels, and actions this day? How happy were it when we ever lie down to rest to have such a short meditation, Hath the fear of God been the thing that hath Acted, and Governed, and Guided me in my course this day? But it follows.

A meditation at going to bed.

What then shall a King do to us? (or, for us?)

* David and Solomon, and many of the Kings of Judah are excepted: because God was their King, 1 Sam. 12. 14. and Chap. 8. 7. Pet. Mar. in Prej. at. Comment. on Judg.

Suppose we had him, now he is gone, but if we had him, what good would he bring to us if we had him? As if they should say, we speak much concerning our King, but now we have not the King with us as he was, but if he were with us again, what should he do for us? what would our condition be better than it is? And indeed, what good had their Kings done for them? The People of Israel they were very desirous of a King, they must needs have a King, God granted to their desires in giving them Saul, then afterwards they must have a King again, so they had Jeroboam, and he must be the King of the ten Tribes. Their first King they had, it was in Gods wrath, and every one of the Kings of Israel * was a plague to them, what had they done for them? All the time they had Judges they were in a better case; Israel was in a far better case when they were rul'd by the Government of God. And Peter Martyr in his Preface to the Book of Judges, observes three things wherein Israel was better when they were under Judges, than Kings.

For first, (saith he) All the time they had Judges, they were not let Captive out of their own Country so as afterwards.

Secondly, When ever they were oppressed and God raised them up a Judg, he did alwaies prevail so as to deliver them from their oppression, before he had done he delivered them

them from their oppreſſion; that's to be obſerved in the ſtory of the Judges: but their Kings did not ſo.

And thirdly, We find not any one of their Judges are charged or condemn'd by God for evil, that they were evil Judges among them, as the Kings are; ſuch a one did evil in the ſight of the Lord, and ſuch a one did evil, and every one of the Kings of Iſrael did ſo. God doth not charge the Judges ſo; it was otherwiſe therefore with them after they had Kings. And the truth is, that Chriſt hath been but little beholding to (I may ſay) almoſt to moſt of our Kings; yea, little beholding to moſt of the Kings that have lived upon the earth, and he hath taken as little care of the greater part of them: As they have taken little care of his Honor, ſo he hath taken little care of the Greater part of them, of all the *Roman Emperors* that were declared by the Senate in Number ſixty three, Hiſtorians agree that there was but ſix of al them that had ſuch protection from God as to die a natural death, but ſix of three ſcore and three; there were twenty nine of the Emperors that did not reign above twenty five years and od months; yea there were twelve of them that did reign but three yeers and od months: ſee what havock was made of them: they regarded not the Honor of Jeſus Chriſt, but were enemies unto him, and he regarded as little their ſafety.

Chriſt little beholding to moſt Kings.

What then ſhould a King do to us?

From hence the Notes are theſe:

First. *When God forſakes a People, there's nothing can do them good.* For they did moſt dote upon a King that ſhould do them good, and help them. When God forſakes a People, nothing then can do them good, *Pſalm, 127.* at the begining, *Except the Lord build the houſe, &c.*

Obſ. 1.

Pſ. 127. 1.

Secondly. *It's juſt with God, to make thoſe things unuſeful to men which they ſinfully dote upon, and put their confidence in.* They ſinfully doted upon Kings, and put their confidence

Obſ. 2.

in

in them, & God doth now justly make the power of Kings unuseful to them: *What shall a King do to us?* If we dote upon them, it's just with God to make them unuseful to us. Or if we dote upon our Credit, and Names, and so upon Kings and Princes; If men expect preferment from them, it's just with God to blast all their hopes, that they should be forced to say, Now I see God fights against him, as we as against me. Thus the people spake in respect of their Kings.

This Scripture may well be a Comment upon that Text we have in Psalm, 146. 3. *Put not your trust in Princes, &c.*

Do not put your trust in Princes, have no confidence in them; If you put your trust in them, they will be unuseful to you. And Chrysostom upon that very Psalm hath this

Note: Whereas they would say, Oh! he is a Prince. Saith Chrysostom, Let me tell you that which you perhaps will wonder at: *Because he is a Prince, therefore put not your trust in him* (saith Chrysostom) And he gives this reason, *Because*

(saith he) *who is in a more unsafe condition than they? Are not they fain to have their Guards go about them to protect them?* They in times of peace when they are in a City that is ruled by good Laws, yet they are fain to have the Instruments of War round about them, to protect them; and therefore put not your confidence in them, because they are Princes: but then in the Psalm, they are call'd to put their confidence in the Lord, *who made Heaven and Earth, the Sea and all that therein is; which keepeth truth for ever.* Alas

you may put confidence in Princes, but they will not keep truth; they will make fair promises to you, that you shall have some great matters by them, but they use you for to serve their own turns; but put your trust in the Lord, and the Lord shall reign for ever; as it is in the 10. verse, *Kings do not reign for ever, they are the children of men, the breath is in their Nostrils; but the Lord shall reign for ever.*

And again thirdly, *What shall a King do for us?* How great an evil is it to a people then, whose complaints

1. None so unsafe as they.

2. None of times so perfidious. (and thats true of most that are in place and power.)

Obs. 3.

plaints are; what doth a King not do againſt us? *Musculus* upon the forenamed Psalm, (thoſe that read his Comment ſhall find that Note in it) ſaith he, You are not to put your truſt in Princes that are the children of men, they are but men; yea, but what ſhall we ſay to thoſe that are cruel oporeſſors that are rather like Tygers and ſuch kind of wild beaſts among men, that ſeem not to be children of men, how ſhall we put our truſt in them? Oh! it's a ſad condition indeed that a people is in, when they have this cauſe to complain, when they ſhall have cauſe to cry out and complain, Oh how! how doth he run from place to place, plundering, ſpoiling, breaking, tearing, deſtroying whereſoever he comes? That people is in a ſad condition, what ſhall he do for us? Nay, what doth he not do againſt us continually? and all this, becauſe we have not feared the Lord. That's the third Note.

Musculus
in Pf 164.

An Effigies
of the laſt
times.

The fourth is, *And what ſhall a King do to us?*

See here the alteration of the ſpirits of theſe men towards their King; King, not long ago they put their confidence in their King, and gloried in their King, and now, what ſhall a King do to us? Hence the Note is;

Obſ. 4.

God can ſoon make a great change in the hearts of people in reference to their Kings; that even thoſe that did dote, and admire him, and own no other God but their King, ſhall even turn their hearts and ſay, *What can a King do for us?* the leaſt turn of God upon the hearts of people will make ſuch a change as this is.

Again, here obſerve, *The difference between the bleſſed eſtate of Gods People, and the wretched eſtate of wicked men;* thoſe who fear God can ſay, What ſhall a King, what ſhall men, what Devils do againſt us? But other men in their ſtraights, what ſhall they do for us? We are in a diſtreſſed condition, and what ſhall they do for us? But the People of God are never in ſuch a diſtreſſed condition but they are able to ſay, What ſhall Men or Devils be able to do againſt us? for God is our Protector.

Obſ. 5.

Again

Obl. 6.

Again fixtly, *The more stoutness, and sinfulness, and creature-confidence there is in any, the more do their hearts sink in desperation when they come to be cross in their hopes.* They were very stout and full of creature-confidence before they were brought into misery, and now what low sordid spirits have they? now they sink in desperation: There's no men and women have their hearts sink in desperation, more than those that in ruff of their pride are the most bold and presumptuous against God and his Servants.

Expof.

Again: *What shall a King do to us? Their hearts sink in regard of any hopes that they have from their King.* But yet you reade nothing of their hearts being set upon God, and mourning, and working towards God, when they are taken from the creature they say not thus, Now we see our vain confidence in our King, and what hopes we had of preferment in him, God hath cross'd us; well, we will go and seek to make the King of Heaven to be our portion. No, there's no such thing comes from them as this.

Obl. 7.

A Carnal heart when it is knockt off of creature confidence and sinks in desperation in regard of the creature, it doth not take advantage upon this, To have the heart work after God so much the more; but there it lies sullen & sinking, it hath no interest in God, and cannot go to him to make up what it wants in the creature: But it is otherwise with a gracious heart, that acknowledges the hand of God hath taken off my confidence in the creature, yea, but I hope it is in mercy to my soul, that my heart might have the more confidence in God, and that God might have the more glory from me, and therefore I hope that this taking off my heart from the creature, will for ever unite my heart more to the Lord than ever heretofore it hath been. Yea, this is a gracious work indeed when the heart is taken off from creature confidence and brought neerer unto the Lord. And thus much for the third Verse. It follows.

VER. 4.

They have ſpoken words.

THEY are convinced of their ſin, that they have not feared God, they cry out of their miſery; what ſhall a King do to them? But mark what follows? this follows upon it, they were not gain'd to God ever a whit the more, *But they have ſpoken Words, ſwearing falſly, in making a Covenant.*

Expof. 1.

When they are taken off from their hopes one way, ſee how they ſet upon another. Luther upon thoſe words, ſaith: it's an Hebraiſm; they have anxiously conſulted. It's the way of the Hebrews ſo to expreſs an anxious conſultation, and for that he quotes that place in *Iſa. 2. 10. Take counſel together, and it ſhall come to naught &c.* So then the meaning would be this:

Obf. 1.

Luther in
loc. hebraſ-
mus eſt, pro
anxie con-
ſultant.
Iſa. 8. 10.

They have ſpoken Words:] That is, they get together and contrive one with another what they ſhall do in ſuch a caſe as this, how they may any way help themſelves. As we read ſometimes of the People of God in *Malac. 3. 16.* thoſe that feared God met one with another and ſpake together; ſo theſe wicked wretches that were thus diſappointed of their hopes, they met together, and ſpake one to another, ſome ſuch kind of word as theſe:

Mal. 3. 16

Our Caſe is very ſad, Oh! who would have thought ſuch things ſhould have befallen us? We are as much croſt of our hopes as ever any men were, we made account we ſhould have over-run them, and they would have been but as bread unto us, we ſhould have made a prey upon them, and all their eſtates would have been ours long before this time; Oh but now, thoſe Prophets that told us that God was againſt us, thoſe Miniſters that encouraged people in the Name of God, and thoſe people that were different from us, now we ſee that their words are fulfilled, and what they thought would come, is now come upon us, now it's

1.

come to pass what such precise ones among us whose consciences would not submit to our waies & the way of our King said, surely they cannot but look upon us as a most wretched miserable forsaken people, now we are like to lose our Houses, Estates, Honors, and all those delightful things that we hoped to have had, we shall lose all those things that we hoped might have made our lives to have been brave, and prosperous, and merry, and jocund, Oh! what shall we do in such a distressed state as this? We had almost as good die as to endure such a miserable life as we are like to live, to be at the mercy of such men whom we know scorn us and hate us, Is there no way to help our selves? cannot we get some or other to joyn with us? cannot we call in no help from any strangers, no matter what we yield to them in. Thus they toss up and down, and wrig up and down, not knowing what in the world to do in their conference.

2. Or thus; May we not yet possibly make up some peace though we be in this distressed condition? Whatsoever propositions they shall profer to us, we will rather than fail yield to them all, we may perhaps get some advantage hereafter or be in some means in a better case to revenge our selves than now we are, If they will have us take the COVENANT, & nothing else will satisfie them, we will do it; and when we have taken it, perhaps they may put some of us in places of trust, and so we may privately work about our own ends that way, and drive on our own designs that way better than in any hostile way, and if together with their *Covenant* they will have Oaths, we will take them too, and if we cannot agree to their *Oaths* or *Covenant* hereafter we will say, we were forced to it, and therefore they do not bind us. Some such kind of communication it's like they had. And could you hear the communication of our Adversaries when they get together in those straights that God hath brought them into, it's like you would hear some such kind of stuff as this

Covenant,

*Animus
in omnia
versant,
ulero citro-
que sermo-
nes confe-
runt. Ter-
nov. in loc.*

is,

is, they ſpake theſe words one to another.

They have ſpoken Words.

According to others thus, *They ſpake words*, that is, thoſe Expof. 2.
 (ſpeaking words) hath reference to the times of the Pro-
 phets threatening, or when they ſaw their danger eminent
 and not fully upon them, ſo ſome carry it : and I find the
Chaldee Paraphraſe hath it thus, *They ſpake violent words*; Loquentur
 and then the ſenſe is thus; they rage, and fret, they ſpeak verba vio-
 proud ſwelling words, they ſwear and curſe; for ſo the lenta.
 curſe in ſwearing ſignifies, curſing, as well as ſwearing,
 they ſwear and curſe; what, our Images be broken down,
 what ſhall we be brought under and made to ſerve our e-
 nemies? We ſcorn it, we deſie all that ſhall have ſuch a
 thought as this is, we will do this and that, we will have
 our minds, we will die for it elſe, we will enter into
 Leagues with ſuch and ſuch, we will get ſuch and ſuch to
 conjure together with us, I'll warrant you we ſhall make
 our party thus and thus : thus they ſpeak great things that
 they will do, yea that they will : *thus they ſpeak words, in*
making a Covenant with Oaths of Vanitie (ſo you may read it.)
 And indeed if men could prevail with great Words, and
 daring Expreſſions, and bold Reſolutions, and deſperate
 Oaths, and wicked Curſes, then may ſome hope to pre-
 vail againſt the God of Heaven and his Saints; but ſaith Obſ.
 he, Theſe things ſhall do them no good. And indeed
 theſe things ſhould never move us, though we hear our
 Adverſaries ſpeak proud ſwelling words, and ſay what
 they will do, threaten Monſterous things, let us not be
 troubled at it, for they do but haſten the Wrath of God a-
 gainſt themſelves. In the mean time while they are ſwea-
 ring, and curſing, and making brags and boalt what they
 will do, the counſels of the Lord they work their ruin,
 and work the good of his people, they ſpake words, ſuch
 kind of Words.

They speak words, swearing falsely, in making a Covenant.

Expos. 3.

1.

What hath this reference to? What Covenant did they make? And wherein did they swear falsely? Some think it hath reference to the Covenant that the People did make with *Jeroboam* at the first, and so with his Successors; that is thus, The People came to him and took their Oaths, and entred into solemn League, that they would stand by him in the breach that he made from the house of *David*, that they would stand by him in oppoling those that would not yeeld to him in the Alteration of Worship: For their Princes would not probably have been so strongly set upon the Alteration of the waies of Worship, had not the People joyned themselves freely to him by way of Oaths and Covenant; now when he saw that the People came in flocking and willing to yeeld to the Oath which he would give them, upon this he was confirm'd in the way that he went in; and so they took Oaths in Covenanting with *Jeroboam* which were but Oaths of vanity; for so the same word that signifies *False*, signifies *Vain* in the Hebrew tongue: so I find *Arias Montanus*, and *Vatablus* take the words as having reference to that.

NW
A. Mont.
Vatabl.

Expos. 4.

2 King. 17

But now others (and that more probably) understand this Covenant and Swearing to be the Covenant that they took with the *Assyrians*, and with the *Egyptians*, the story of which you have in the fornamed place, in 2 *King. 17.* *Hoshea sent Messengers to So King of Egypt, and brought no present to the King of Assyria as he had done year by year.* First, he had Covenanted with the King of *Assyria* and that was broke, and then they would Covenant with *So King of Egypt*, and so they swore falsely, in making a Covenant with the *Assyrians*, and the *Egyptians*.

Obs. 1.

Now the Observations are, *That Carnal hearts in their straights have no God to go to, therefore they take shifting courses; As a Dog that hath lost his Master, will follow after any for relief.* And

And ſecondly, *It's an evil thing in ſtraights for men that profeſs Religion to combine with wicked men.* God profeſſed he will not take the wicked by the hand, neither ſhould we; it's a ſign the cauſe is evil, when men can have no other help but by combining with wicked and ungodly men. Juſt thus it is for all the world with our adverſaries (at this day) to the Parliament, all men generally that have any profeſſion of Godlineſs they ſee they cannot have help that way, therefore combine and bring into Covenant *Iriſh* Rebels, Papilts, any People in the world, If it were *Turks*, or *Jews*, or any in the world to help themſelves withal; this is the wickedneſs of mens hearts.

Obſ. 2.

Applic. to
the Court-
partie.

And then thirdly, *There is no truſt to be had to wicked men in their Oaths and Covenants;* let their Proteſtations be never ſo ſolemn, their Oaths, their Covenants, it is but only to gain time to work about ſome advantage, that they cannot work about for the preſent while they have any oppoſition: If they have not things under their power as they deſire, they will promiſe you any thing in the world, but when once they come to get power in their hands, then who ſhall require the fulfilling of their Promiſes, their Oaths, their Covenants? And therefore certainly, when we have to deal with thoſe that we have had experience to be falſe, we muſt ever retain this concluſion, except we ſee an apparent change in their hearts, for that's not enough that they are willing to take Covenants, that's no new thing; but till we ſee that God hath wrought ſome mighty work upon their hearts we muſt carry this concluſion, Certainly if they can they will ruin us, therefore our condition cannot be ſafe but to be ſo as they can do us no hurt. That's the third Note. And then the fourth is this:

Obſ. 3.

That, *Breaking Covenant, though with wicked men, is a very great wickedneſs, God will be revenged for it.* I have heretofore ſpoken of falſeneſs, and falſeneſs in Covenant, and Promiſes, and ſhewen you the example of *Saul* and *Zedekiah*, therefore I ſhall not look back to thoſe things. God

Obſ. 4.

lover

*Fides com-
mune ho-
minis pre-
sidium:*

Cicero.

*Fidei tem-
plum stru-
xit Nu-
ma, san-
ctissimum-
que esse ju-
firandum
voluit per
fidem.*

*The E-
gyptians.
Tissapher-
nes.*

Agessilaus.

Applicat.

loves humane societies, which cannot be preserved but by faithfulness; Faithfulness (it's the speech of a Heathen) it's the common safety of all men. I remember I have read of the *Romans* that they did so esteem of Faithfulness, by the light of Nature in Covenants, that they accounted Faithfulness to be a Goddess, and they built, and dedicated a Temple unto fidelity as to a Goddess, in which Temple all their Leagues, Truces, Covenants, and Bargains were sworn, which were so Religiously observed, that whosoever broke them, was to be held as a cursed and damned creature, unworthy to live in humane societies. And the *Egyptians* would punish Perjury with death. Among the *Indians* the fingers and toes of Perjured persons were cut off. And I have likewise read when *Tissaphernes* the *Persian* warred against the *Grecians*, he broke Covenant with the *Grecians*. Now *Agessilaus* when he saw that they had broke their Covenant, he rejoiced at it greatly, saying thus, For (saith he) by this means he hath made the gods to be his enemy, and our friend; wherefore let us boldly give him battel. We know how our enemies have broken their Covenants from time to time, and their Conditions that they have made themselves, yea, even lately in *that Town* that we hear such good of now, that we hope the Lord is even revenging himself upon them for breaking Covenant even in that very place. Now my Brethren, that even Heathens themselves are convinc'd of this great evil, that is so dreadful an evil; what cause have we to lay our hands upon our hearts this day in respect of that part of our Covenant, that concerns one another, for certainly since the time of our solemn Covenant there was never more treachery than there hath been in *England*, and in *Scotland* too, there hath been as much treachery since that time as ever yet was, since either of them were a Nation; we have been false one to another so far as it relates to our selves.

*Expol. 3.
Calvin,*

But I find that *Calvin* in his Notes upon this Scripture, under-

underſtands this Oath and Covenant not to be a Covenant to men, but their Covenant with God, in promiſing repentance and new obedience, and ſo they ſpake only words, *Swearing falſly*, they did but deceive him in ſwearing and making a Covenant; and this indeed is a ſore and dreadful evil to ſwear to the high God, and to Covenant with him, to draw ſo nigh to him and yet to be falſe, God threatens in *Levit. 26. 25. That he will ſend a ſword to avenge the quarrel of his Covenant*; and when we ſee the ſword rageth ſo as it doth, we may have cauſe to fear that the Lord hath a quarrel againſt us, in avenging the late Covenant that hath been made (I mean our falſeneſs in it) and that we may ſee further our guiltineſs and evil in ſwearing falſly in making a Covenant, we muſt know that many waies our hearts may be falſe in our Covenants with God. It is a dreadful evil to be falſe any way in Covenant with God; any of you that upon your ſick beds have been ſolemnly promiſing to God reformation if God reſtor'd you; if you be falſe, Oh know, that the Lord hath a quarrel againſt you, and he hath a dreadful evil to charge upon your ſouls: How many of you have been falſe in your private Covenants? But to be falſe in publick Covenants, that's moſt dreadful. But our hearts may be falſe divers waies. As,

First, If we take our Covenant meerly upon politick grounds, we make the ſolemn Worſhip of God, wherein we expreſs our fidelity for Reformation of Religion to be meerly ſubſerviant to politick grounds, here's a falſeneſs of heart, we are falſe in ſwearing thus, and making a Covenant; we do not ſanctifie the Name of God as we ought.

Or Secondly, If we put falſe Interpretations, we are falſe; when we ſhall make our Covenant a meer ſnare to our Brethren; let us conſider how far any of us are guilty of this, and let the Lord judge between us; I ſay, when we ſeek to make it a ſnare even to our Brethren: How have

theſe

They did
verba da-
re.

Levit. 26.
25.

Violation
of the Na-
tional Co-
venant pu-
niſhed with
the ſword.

Men may
be falſe in
Covenant.

1. For po-
litick ends
only.

2. Putting
falſe inter-
pretations
on it,
to make it
a ſnare.

those been accused for the breach of this Oath which have not accorded in things that are in Controversie with our Brethren, as if this Oath were put upon all men to determine most abstruse and difficult points of Controversie, to bring men to submit to things as are very abstruse and difficult to understand; this were to make an Oath a snare, and to take the Name of God in vain in a fearful manner: Certainly the Lord never would have Oaths put to men to this end, that men that are of different waies and opinions in Controversal things, for to be forced by way of an Oath to be of the same judgement, and to do the same things; this is a great abuse of this Oath wheresoever it is urged so far; Certainly there's no man guilty of the breach of this Oath and Covenant, that shall but endeavor what he can to understand what the mind of God is, and then to practice according as he understands, though he should mistake, as in the point of Schism in that point of the Covenant; the thing its self being a sin, we may as well swear against it, as *David* did to keep Gods Commandments: but now, if *David* did labor to understand Gods Commandments, and do as far as he did understand; suppose he did not understand all things aright, it might be his weakness, but not his perjury. So, let us be in point of Schism, or any other point of the Covenant, if men do endeavor to understand what is Schism by the Scripture, and accordingly do in their severall places, by what means their consciences tells them is lawful endeavor to oppose it, though they should not think that to be Schism that their Brethren do think, or perhaps is so, yet they are not forsworn: this is evil, to make a Covenant to be a snare unto us, and our hearts so far are false in it.

*Psal. 119.
106. David swearing to keep all Gods Commandments explained.*

3. In not fulfilling it according to the nature of it.

And then thirdly: Then is the heart false in making a Covenant, when it doth not fulfill it according to the nature of it, when it goes quite opposite against it. As since our Covenant hath been made; When was there ever greater divisions? Our Covenant is for unity: When more

prophaneness

ungodlineſs; our Covenant is againſt it; when more in-juſtice? Our Covenant is againſt all theſe, and yet ſince *England* was a Nation there was never ſtronger cries came to Heaven for theſe ſins than there hath been ſince our Covenant. And therefore certainly there's a great breach between God and us in this regard.

And then fourthly, When men make their Covenant to be a cloak for Malignity; that is, Though they have Malignant and vile wicked ſpirits, yet they can but take the Covenant and then all is well. Here they ſwear falſely in making a Covenant.

4. *When the Covenant is made a cloak for malignity.*

Thus Judgment ſpringeth up as Hemlock in the furrows of the field.

After this their Covenant there is a great deal of in-juſtice among them.

Obſ.

Judgment.] By Judgment, ſome underſtand the Judgments of God, and then the ſenſe is, Thoſe wicked waies of yours are the ſeeds that brings up Gods Judgments, that is as Hemlock bitter and deadly; there's a truth in this Interpretation, though I think it is not the full ſcope of the words here: but it may be the holy Ghoſt, would hint ſome ſuch thing unto us in it, That our actions are as ſeeds, and what they are ſown here they will bring forth according to the nature of them. *Wicked actions when they are ſown, will bring forth bitter fruit, will bring forth Hemlock.* It may be (ſaith he) you look for peace and proſperity, but contrary to your expectation, behold *Hemlock* and bitterneſs. I beſeech you take heed of preparing your ſelves a potion of Hemlock againſt you lie ſick and are caſt upon your death bed; a man hath ſown his field, he thinks to have a good crop of Corn, but Judgment, the Judgment of God comes up, and there's Hemlock inſtead of it.

Expof. 1.

A potion of Hemlock.

But becauſe I think this not to be the ſcope of the place,

Y y

therefore

therefore I pass it by, and rather think that by Judgment is here meant,

Expos. 2. *Righteousness, Equity, and Justice.*

That whereas there should be *Righteousness, Equity, and Justice*, as it's expected: behold instead of this there springs up a crop of *Oppression, Unrighteousness, and Injustice* that is bitter as Hemlock; I rather think that this must be the meaning, because I find that in divers Scriptures Injustice is compared to bitter things, yea, to Hemlock its self, in *Amos*, to Hemlock 5. 7. *Ye turn Judgment to Wormwood, and leave off Righteousness in the Earth.* And in *Amos*, 6. 12. *Shall Horses run upon the Rock? will one plow there with Oxen? I will not stand to open the former text, but you see the Scripture charges the people by this expression, of sinning against Judgment and Righteousness, that they turned it to Hemlock.*

Now I find three things especially recorded of this herb.

The nature of Hemlock First, It is a very venomous herb; therefore I find *Pliny* records of it in his 25. Book, 13. Chap. of Natural History, that the *Athenians* did use to give this to malefactors that were condemn'd to die to execute them withal. And *Socrates* that was so wise a man among them, yet he because he did not yield to their gods, but spake against their false gods, therefore they judged him to die, and he must drink a potion of *Hemlock*, and so died.

He died for maintaining there was but one God. And Secondly, I find the same Author saith of it that, the leaves are somewhat like to *Coriander*, but that they be more tender, and a strong stinking smell they have with them: and the seeds like to *Annis*. And so Justice seems to have a very fair pretence sometimes, and may seem to do things that are very good; under very fair pretences men are very unjust: the leaves when they come up one would think there should be such a fine fruit, one would think to have *Coriander*, or *Annis*, but the truth is, it comes to *Hemlock* at last.

And

And then the third thing is, that which *Hierom* reports of it, and it is in his Comment upon my text, he saith that Hemlock grows up very stiff and full of joynts, and at the joynts (he saith) it puts forth a stalk, and that doth not on-ly sprout upwards and bear fruit, but downwards to have a root, & he saith that every branch, If it hath but a joynt in it will serve intead of a seed, yea, every sprig of it will serve intead of seed; yea, he saith, if any pieces falls to the ground, it wil grow up, and so grow up as that it will be very hard to rid the ground of it. And truly thus it doth resemble injustice, if it be let alone but a little, Oh how it multiplies one to another and spreads through the whol Land quickly.

And *Pliny* doth observe many other things too, he saith that the root of it is hollow, and that's unfit for any use at all; and so are the hearts of those that are unjust, hollow hearts and unfit for any thing.

And also he saith, that the leaves are fit for swellings, and against sore eyes. And God doth turn even the injustice that is many times, among a people to be medicines to his people against their swellings, and to open their sore eyes.

And he saith, That if Hemlock be drank in Wine, it will certainly kill a man, and there is no remedy. So if men shall be unjust and take delight in it, and take pleasure in it, and scorn and contemn at those that they can oppress by injustice, those men are in a desperate condition indeed.

And then lastly, he doth observe by this Herb that it kills by cold, those that takes the leaves or seeds, if they get the mastery of any they shall feel themselves begin to was cold in their inward parts, and so die inwardly. Oh! how many who have been very hot and zealous, yet having gotten power into their hands they have unrighteously used their power, they have grown cold in what they were formerly zealous in, and still they grow colder, and colder;

Y^y 2

and

Hierom
in *h.c.*

4.

*Unjust men
hollow.*

5.

*God sanctifies to
his people
the iniquity
done upon them.*

6.

*Those that
delight in
Injustice
are in a
desperate
condition.*

7.

*Injustice
kills by cool-
ing.*

and thus their unrighteousness is like to prove to be their death.

In the furrows of the field.

Calvin.
Expos.
*Cur potius
supra sul-
cos agri,
quam in
agro?*

Calvin puts this Question, Why doth he not say, it springs up in the field, but in the furrows of the field? And he gives this Answer to it; Where there are furrows in the field, there hath the plow come that hath broken up the field, and it is to prepare for good seed when the field is laid in furrows, and it's less tollerable for Hemlock to spring up there than in the field that is not plowed, or in other places.

Obf.

But when a field is plowed and prepared for seed, and one would hope to have much advantage by his field; to have much Justice and Righteousness in a Country, when we see there hath been great works of God to cast out those that were unjust before, and the expectation of all the people is, that certainly now there will be nothing but Righteousness, and Judgment; but instead of that comes up Injustice, and Oppression, as Hemlock, it springeth up in such a field that is so prepared for Justice. Oh! this is that which is a sore evil, that the Lord is so provoked against, and so complains of, that *Judgment springeth up as Hemlock in the furrows of the field.*

Thus Judgment springeth up as Hemlock in the furrows of the field.

What the meaning of Hemlock in the furrows of the field is, you have heard already: From whence the Note is this,

Obf. i.

That People is in a sad condition, and it is a sign the Lord hath forsaken them, that they are neer ruin, when those places where there is most likelihood of Justice and Equity, that there should be Injustice and Oppression. Oppression and Injustice in places

where

where God expects Righteouſneſs and Equity, is a ſad Omen, a forerunner of great evil to places. It's Gods complaint in *Iſa. 5.* Juſt before he threatned the utter ſpoiling of his Vinyard, he gives this reaſon, *I (ſaith he) looked that it ſhould bring forth Grapes; and behold, it brought forth wild Grapes:* and he mentions among the wild Grapes, *Injuſtice:* there it's call'd wild Grapes, as Hemlock here, for both are very ſowr, and bitter before the Lord; Injuſtice in places from whence Juſtice may be expected, is by the Lord accounted a moſt fearful, a ruining ſin: In *Amos, 5.* 12. *I know (ſaith the Lord) your manifold tranſgreſſions, and your mighty ſins.* Now the word that is tranſlated [*mighty ſins*] it is in the Hebrew your *Boney ſins*, becauſe the ſtrength of a man it is in his bones; and therefore he calls the ſtrength of that ſin *boney*; it is a very ſtrong ſin, it cannot eaſily be reſiſted; your ſins have great bones in them (ſaith he) and what are they? *You afflict the Juſt, you take a Bribe, that you may turn away the poor in the gate from their right:* that's their great and their mighty ſins. In *Jer. 22. 15.* *Did not thy Father do Judgment and Juſtice, and then it was well with him? He judged the Cauſe of the poor and the needy, and then, it was well with him again. And was not this to know me, ſaith the Lord?* Let men talk never ſo much of Reformation, and of ſetting up the Worſhip of God, and of caſting out falſe Worſhip, yet if they rejoyce in Injuſtice and Oppreſſion inſtead of that, God will not take himſelf as known; but ſaith he, *Thine eyes and thy heart, are after covetouſneſs, and for oppreſſion, and for violence;* and in *Amos, 5. 21.* is a remarkable place for this, ſaith he, *I hate, I deſpiſe your feaſt daies, and I will not ſmell to your ſolemn Aſſemblies.* You have many Feaſt daies, and daies of Thankſgiving, you bleſs me for what I do for you, but I will not care for your daies of Thankſgiving, (why?) in the 24. verſe, *Let Judgment run down as waters, and Righteouſneſs as a mighty river;* as if he ſhould ſay, keep as many daies of Thankſgiving as you will, I care for none of them, except Judgment run down

*Iſa. 5.**Amos, 5.**12.**explained.**Ier. 22. 15**Amos, 5.**21.**Daies of
Thanks-
giving.**Ver. 24.*

explained.

Isa. 58.

as water, and Righteousness as a mighty stream : Mark here the expression of the holy Ghost, Judgment and Righteousness is compared to a River, that is, it should be common for all, that the poorest might come and take of it as well as the richest, it must not be like a Pond, or Well, inclosed for a mans private use ; but saith he, Let Judgment run down as Water, and Righteousness as a River ; it must be as a River : now you know the *Thames* every poor body may come and fetch water there for their relief : so Justice should be like the Water in the *Thames* that the poorest of all may have it *for the very fetching of it* : But till then saith he, I regard none of your daies of thanksgiving. And so in *Isa. 58.* there's one special reason why the daies of Fasting were not regarded, it was, because of their oppression of the poor, and their uncharitableness, and their Injuriousness in the Courts of Justice. We have now many daies of Fasting and Thanksgiving more than ever yet *England* knew, & we may think that God wil smel a sweet savor, but Oh ! this Hemlock coming up in the furrows of the field will imbitter all, for if ever God did look for Righteousness and Judgment from a people, then certainly he looks for Righteousness and Judgment from us at this day ; Oh ! for us now, that stand in need of so much mercy, that cry for mercy, and be oppressing at such a time as this is, it is a most dreadful thing : What, is all the cost that God hath bestowed upon us come to this, that there should be no other fruit but Hemlock to come up in the furrows in the field ; all the cost of God and man, all the Works of God towards us, doth it come but to this issue, only to bring forth Hemlock ? Was there ever more cries, was there ever more bitter moans and complaints because of Injustice than of late hath been in this Land ? Never were People so frustrated in their expectations. When indeed such as were notoriously wicked were in place, then we expected nothing but Hemlock : But now they are cast out of place, and others are come in, we hoped that there had

had been ſuch a preparation that nothing but fruits of Righteouſneſs would have come up. But now to be oppreſſed by them that are in places of former oppreſſors, this is grievous. Lord, what is man? In *Iſa. 59. 9.* Therefore (ſaith he) is Judgment far from us, neither doth Juſtice overtake us; we wait for light, but behold obſcurity, for brightneſs, but we walk in darkneſs, (this light it is eſpecially ſpoken of the light of Juſtice) as if they ſhould ſay; the Land once indeed was dark, all the Courts of Judicature, and all the men that had places to judg in, they were darkneſs, and we had nothing but darkneſs; yea, but now we waited for light, we hoped now there would be Reformation, it's ſpoken after their many daies of Faſting and Prayer, but yet behold darkneſs, behold oppreſſion ſtill, Oh! many who are come empty into places of power ſuck harder than ſome former Oppreſſors did? And what will be the end of theſe things? How many poor men travel many times far, expecting fruits of Juſtice, but they meet with Hemlock? they ſigh and liſt up their eyes and hearts to Heaven, ſending up their moans to God, Lord, is this the fruit of our labor? do our hopes come to this? What, muſt we go home with ſad hearts and be made a ſcorn and prey to thoſe that are wicked round about us? Oh! theſe are ſad moans at ſuch times as theſe are.

My Brethren, it were eaſie to name many ſtalks of Hemlock that there are come up inſtead of Righteouſneſs and Judgment among us. I'll name one or two. What do you think of this.

Fiſt, That ſuch as have been notoriouſly Malignant, yea, ſuch as have been upon actual War ſhould yet upon any ſlight acknowledgment or coming in, or for their own ends taking Covenant, ſhould get into Committees, and have power there over the Well-aſſected party who have been moſt forward at the fiſt, but now thoſe who hate them and have ſpirits full of bitterneſs againſt them, ſhould have power over them to tax them as they pleaſe. Power

over

Iſa. 59. 9.

expounded

Illustrated further.

Some ſtalks of Hemlock in Engl. ſpring up ſince we hoped for reformation I. Malign. in Committees.

over their estates, their liberty, power to order the affairs of the Country round about them, and that now they should revenge themselves upon them because they were so forward in the beginning; Oh! we may thank you, had it not been for such as you are, we had never gone on so far in the Wars, If you had not come in so freely &c. And now they have opportunity to revenge themselves upon them; What grows in the furrows here but bitter and venomous Hemlock? Where the fault lies, that we cannot determine, but such men, doing such things, in such places, It is nothing but Hemlock in the furrows of the field.

2. The Officers oppressed, while the poor Soldiers starve.

The cry of Widows and Children.

Secondly; Here's another stalk of Hemlock, That poor men taken from their families, who were the only means by their livelihood to bring in a livelihood to their wives and children, yet should be so without pay themselves, and wives and children left destitute of bread and cloathing; and Officers in an Army who were but mean men heretofore and knew scarce how to live, now they live bravely, glister in their Gold and Silver lace, what's this but *Hemlock*? Is not here Injustice and Oppression? that thousands should want bread, that widdows and children cry out for bread that liv'd pretty well heretofore, and others which knew not how to live heretofore, yet now shall be brave in a far higher way than ever formerly, Is not here Hemlock that grows up in the furrows of the field? I know not neither where to charge this, but yet we see Hemlock doth come up.

Caution.

But now though we might name many other stalks of Hemlock, yet certainly take this Caution along with you. Every man in such times of distraction wherein we live, must account to suffer something, things cannot be carried on with that equity as if all things were settled among us, therefore though we may in an humble and peaceable way make our moans one to another, and seek to inform those that are in Power, and Petition, yet it ought to be our care what-

what ever we ſuffer in our particular, to preſerve what we can the honor of our *Supream Court*; better many particulars ſuffer hard things than the honor of that ſhould not be kept up; for by not keeping up that we make way to ſuffer worſe things than ever yet we have done: for how would we have help when we meet with Wrong and Injuſtice? Under God there are but three waies, two extreams, and one middle: for men to have right in caſe of Injuſtice. The two extreams they are (beſide, our appeal to God) I ſpeak to men, whereby a man can have any thought to get help againſt Injuſtice.

1. The one extreame is, That which heretofore was the *Kings Arbitrary Power*, acted by thoſe that are about him. We have taſted enough of this Hemlock heretofore, Would we think to have our help that way? We know what that Hemlock means.

The honor
of our SUP-
REAM
COURT
ſhould be
kept up.

Three ways
to have
right in
our wrongs

1.
The Kings
prerogative

2.
An Appeal
to the Peo-
ple:
which re-
medies are
worſe than
the diſeaſe.

3.
By our
PARLIA-
MENTS
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ſinful, are
of only law-
ful way.

The ſecond extreame is, *The appeal to the People*, that were a remedy worſe than the diſeaſe, for then all would ſeem to come to be in a confuſion that way, if the People, the generality of the people ſhould take up the matter we ſhould then have nothing but murders and robberies. Then the meaneſt man that lives in the Kingdom if he hath but as ſtrong Arms and Legs as the richeſt of all, he is preſently equal with them, when things come to be redreſt by the tumultuous people.

Therefore the third way of help in way of Injuſtice it is *The Mene*, and that is by our *Parliament*, that is, as things are now, is the only regular help that we can have, If we ſee therefore, or feel ſome things amiſs, we may be ſenſible and ſeek help too, but in a peaceable and humble way of Petitioning, but ſtill we ſhould be more tender of their honor than of our own private right. And an appeal to Heaven there may be likewiſe, but of any ſeeming way of appeal to either of the two extreams, certainly in that we make our remedy worſe than the diſeaſe: Pray much for them therefore that there may not one ſtalk of Hemlock

rise up among them; or any seed fall down from them, but that they may be as the field which the Lord hath blessed, *Full of the fruits of Justice and Righteousness*, that themselves, and this City, and the Kingdom may be the habitation of Justice, *That Mercy and Truth may meet together; that Righteousness and Peace may kiss each other; that Truth may spring out of the earth, and Righteousness may look down from Heaven*; so you have it in Psal. 85. 9, 10, 11. verses.

Psal. 85. 9,
10, 11.
Tremel.
Pareus.

Now there's one Note more that I find Tremelius and Pareus and divers others have. The *Furrows of the field* (say they) there is in the latter end of the word translated [*field*]

*Agrorum
meorum.*

a Jod: which by some is made paragogical [and an addition of form only] But others to be an affix for the plural number, and so they translate it to be thus. [*Hemlock in the furrows of my field*] And that is a great aggravation. If Hemlock should be in the furrows of any field it's evil, but what, my people! men that profess Godliness, what those that profess to set up Reformation, yet Hemlock there in the furrows of my field! Oh! this is sad and evil indeed.

Ier. 31. 23

In Jer. 31. 23. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, *As yet they shall use this speech, in the Land of Judah, and in the Cities thereof; when I shall bring again the Captivity thereof, The Lord bless thee O habitation of Justice, and mountain of Holiness.* When I bring their captivity again, when I'll own them to be mine, then there shall be such eminent Justice and Holiness that this speech shall be used, *The Lord bless thee, O habitation of Justice, and mountain of Holiness.* So if we would have any evidence to our souls that God doth own us, and that we are his, and God indeed hath delivered us from our Captivity, we should labor that Justice and holiness may be so eminent that all the people about us may say, *The Lord bless this Land, the habitation of Justice, and mountain of Holiness.* Both must go together, we must not think to raise up the Ordinances of God, and cast out superstition, but we must be the habitation of Justice; of the Lord that the Lord hath blessed. It follows.

Reformati-
on cannot
prosper
without
promotion
of Justice,
and remo-
ving of
Oppres-
sion.

VER.

VER. 5

The Inhabitants of Samaria ſhall fear, becauſe of the Calves of Beth-aven.

YOU heard before that they were convinced in their conſciences that they did not fear God, *For now they ſhall ſay, We have no King, becauſe we feared not the Lord. They feared not God, but now they ſhall fear.* From whence the Note is this.

That thoſe that fear God leaſt, are moſt afraid of any thing elſe. Obſ. 1. Where the fear of God is not, other baſe fear will be, and ſo much the more, the leſs we fear God. Oh ! how much better were it that our fear were ſet upon God, than upon other things ? You muſt love ſomething ; Were it not better that your love were placed upon God than any thing elſe ? And you muſt fear ſomething ; Were it not better that your fear were upon God, than any thing elſe ? And you muſt rejoyce in ſomething, and ſorrow and the like. *Fear, it is a very troubleſom affection, if it be miſplaced ; Oh ! learn to place your affections right, place them upon God : By the fear of God you ſhall come to fear nothing elſe ; Oh ! how excellent is Gods fear ! This one thing ſets out the excellency of the fear of God : That where the fear of God is ſetled in the hearts of men and women, all other baſe fears are rooted out.* Would not you be glad to be delivered from creature fears, eſpecially you that have liv'd in many dangers a few months ſince ? Oh ! if you might be delivered from the fears of the creature, how glad would you bee ? Here's the only way ; Let the fear of God be ſtrong in your hearts, and the fear of the creature will not prevail with you.

You ſee it clearly in the example of *Habakkuk*, in *Hab. 3. 16.* *When I heard (God revea'd his will) my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice ; rottenneſs entred into my bones.* *Hab. 3. 16.*

and I trembled in my self. (But now *Habakkuk*, why would you trouble your self with so much fear?) Mark, there was a great good came to him by it, *That I might rest in the day of trouble when he cometh up unto the people*: When there shall be a coming up unto the people, and the enemy shall prevail, and when the figtree shall not blossom, nor the fruit be in the Vine, the labor of the Olive shall fail, and the field shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls, when things shall be brought into the most sad condition, that men shall be at their wits end and know not what in the world to do, then (saith he) *I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation. When God spake, Then my belly trembled, and my lips quivered at the voice.* Yea, but when men came in the greatest rage, and when all things were dark and dismal, and black abroad, yet then did I rejoyce in the Lord, and joy in the God of my Salvation, all fear was gone then. Men can rejoyce in the time of their prosperity, but in times of afflictions then they fear? Whereas those that fear the Lord in their prosperity, in the times of their affliction then they most rejoyce. It's a notable speech I remember I have read in *Nazianzen* in his 12. Oration (saith he) *This is our care, That we are afraid of nothing more, than that we should fear any thing more than God, That's his expression.* Here's an excellent fear, here's fear rightly set; Would you fear? fear to fear any thing more than God, and then your fear is set right: but if you do not, &c. Though men that have no fear of God they may seem to have bold spirits, and it seems to come through the greatness of their spirits, that they will not fear God, yet these men in the time of danger are the most base cowardly men in the world. Ple give you a notable instance for this, *Manasses* he was as proud an insolent man, that seem'd to be fearless of any threatening of God, scorn'd his Prophets; But mark, when he came into danger, in 2 Chron. 33. 11. where did they find *Manasses*? he was run into the bushes,

αὐτὸς ὁ
ἐν τῇ ἐκ-
κλησίᾳ
τῇ πρὸς
τοὺς ἁγίους
καὶ τοὺς
ἀγγέλους.
Nazian.
Orat. 12.

buſhes, this brave bold ſpirited man that dar'd God and his Prophets, and car'd not for what was ſaid, yet when he came into any danger, what a baſe low ſpirit he had? he runs and hides himſelf in a company of Buſhes and Bryars.

This is the temper and guiſe of the ſpirits of men that will not fear God.

They ſhall fear, becauſe of the Calves of Beth-aven.

You know what they were, thoſe that Jeroboam ſet up in Dan and Bethel, the golden Calves.

Luther upon the place moves a Queſtion, What a wonderful thing is it (ſaith he) that Jeroboam ſhould be ſo bold, to ſet up Calves to worſhip, when there's that eminent ſtory of Gods revenging himſelf for the peoples worſhiping a Calf that Aaron ſet up, that at one time coſt the lives of twenty three thouſand men which were ſlain, and yet that Jeroboam ſhould preſume to ſet up Calves again to worſhip? It was a ſtrange bold attempt ſaith Luther, it was a wonderful thing that he ſhould be ſo bold, and that he ſhould prevail with the people. Luther gives the Answer to this Queſtion, thus :

The truth is, there is nothing ſo horrible and vile but people in a little time will be brought to yield to it, if great ones by their example, and by their endeavor labor to ſet it up, it will be ſet up be it never ſo vile, never ſo abominable, yet people will be brought to it : that is his Answer.

And truly we find it ſo, that let people ſeem to abhor things never ſo much, yet if they find it be the ſway of great ones, and if it be once ſet up in a way of power they yeeld to it : One would think it an impoſſible thing that now God having caſt ſo much odium upon our Prelates, one would think it impoſſible for the People of England ever to be brought to yeeld to them, and I make no queſti-

The people will follow great ones
Si impiorum principum ſtudium et exemplum accedat.
Luther

The Prelates.

on

on but many of you say so when you meet together; but do not deceive your selves, if so be that those had prevailed that sought to prevail against us, we should quickly have the spirits of people turned in a moment, and as much for Prelates and Ceremonies, and Altars (for the generality of the People I mean) as here they did to these Calves again, though they had that sad story in their ears continually, of so many thousands that were slain for Calves before.

They shall fear, because of the Calves of Beth-aven.

Why, were there many Calves at *Beth-aven*? Indeed there were Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, but there was but one at each of them. Here *Beth-aven* and *Bethel* was all one, *Jeroboam* was so subtil to set up the Calf at *Bethel* because the place took its name from God, but here the holy Ghost calls it a House of *Beth-aven*, because it signifies a house of *Vanity*, or *Iniquity*, God calls it by another name: We may call things by names that may hold up some honor and respect, but God will give another name to these things that we would fain put an honor upon.

He calls it *Beth-aven*, and the Calves of *Beth-aven*. Why, was there many Calves at *Beth-aven*?

Expos. 1. Now the Answer that some give is this: There was but one at *Bethel* indeed; but both *Bethel* and *Dan* may have the name *Beth-aven*, (for they are both houses of vanity) and so called Calves in respect of them both.

2. Or others thus; *The Calves of Beth-aven*: As if the Prophet should say, Set up as many Calves as you will, they shall not help you if you had a thousand of them.

3. Or rather as I find som, *Arias Montanus* with others, They are called the Calves of *Beth-aven*, because according to the example of the Calf that was set up at *Beth-aven*, their workmen did make other little ones, to be in their houses; like as *Demetrius* that was the Silver-Smith for *Diana*, made Shrines

Shrines for *Diana's Temple*, it was *Demetrius's* trade to make little kind of Temples in Silver, either to hang about their necks, or to be in their houses, or ornaments: So it was probable that the Calf that was set up at *Bethaven* had so much honor put upon it, as to have little things made with Silver or Gold according to their estates; perhaps for mean men, little things made with Wood, and Gentlemen with Silver, and others with Gold, like to those Calves, and so had them in their families; and therefore they are called *Calves* in the plural number. And if this were so, we might have a good Note from that:

That the true Worshipers of God should labor to bring the true Worship of God into their families. They would bring the Calf into their families, or houses; so should we bring the Ordinances of God into our families, bring the Worship of God into our families, and not content our selves with publick Worship, but have private Worship too; they did not content themselves with a Calf abroad, but had them at home in their houses or families.

And further there is a Note from it, *They are called the Calves in the feminine gender, the she Calves, that is in a way of Contempt of them.*

The inhabitants of Samaria shall fear, because of the Calves of BETH-AVEN.

Why the inhabitants of *Samaria*? The Calves were not there. *Samaria* was their chief City; as *London* is to *England*, so *Samaria* was the chief City to the ten Tribes: And *Samaria* shall fear. *Samaria* was a very strong City: And when the *Assyrians* came and carried away the ten Tribes captive, they took all the Country round about before they took *Samaria*: it was with *Samaria* as with *London* in these sad times: when there hath bin wars round about in *England*, *London* hath bin safe for these three years together: And so when there was wars in al *Israel*, yet *Samaria*

ria continued safe; yea, not only when some Towns, but when every Town was taken, *Samaria* was so strong as to be able to endure a siege for three years together: thus you shall find in *2 King. 17. 5.* That the King of *Assyria* came and besieged *Samaria* three years: yet this it was, and yet the text saith, *The inhabitants of Samaria shall fear, because of the Calves of Beth-aven.* That is, though they were a strong City, yet when we heard that their gods were taken away, yea, when they did but hear that *Bethel* and *Dan* were in danger to have their gods taken away, Oh! they were sensible of this, though they were safe for their outward condition for the present, and had strength enough to resist the Enemies, yet they were afraid: that is, there was a solicitous fear in them about the Calves of *Bethaven* before they were taken, and when they were taken their hearts were daunted, and knew not what in the world to do. So you see the meaning of the words: from whence the Note is this:

Obs. I.

First, *That in times of danger our hearts should be most solicitous about the Worship of God.* It was so in the time of their danger, their hearts were especially solicitous about *Bethel*, Oh! that was the place where they had the Worship of their Gods. So, are Idolaters solicitous in time of danger, not so much because of their outward peace, (it is not said that they were afraid because the enemies would come and take their Corn, or their Estates) but *Beth-aven*, where the Calves were, they were afraid of that. When there is any danger that should go next to our hearts, The honor of God, his Church, his Ordinances: Thus it was with old *Eli* in *1 Sam. 4. 13.* the text saith, *That Eli sat upon a seat by the way side watching; for his heart trembled for the Ark of God:* Why, he had his sons in the Army, his heart did not tremble for them, and that if the enemies should prevail he was like to lose his estate, and there would come woful misery upon the Land for the outward condition of it, No, but his heart trembled not for that, but for the

1 Sam.

4. 13.

Eli's example urged.

Ark

Ark of God. I appeal to you what was that which your hearts trembled moſt for in the time of our greateſt danger? Was it for the Ark of God? was it becauſe of his Ordinances? Oh! if they prevail they will trample the Ordinances of the Lord and the Saints of God under feet, the true Worſhip of God, and the Power of Godlineſs, did your hearts tremble becauſe of this? Certainly if your hearts were right they would do ſo: What, ſhall Idolaters tremble becauſe of their Calves, and ſhall not we have our hearts tremble becauſe of our God? 1 King. 8. 44. *If thy People go out to battel againſt their enemies, whitherſoever thou ſhalt ſend them, (what ſhould they do?) and look towards the City which thou haſt choſen, and towards the Houſe that I have built for thy Name; then hear thou in Heaven. They when they are in prayer muſt look towards the City and the Temple; for the Temple was a type of Chriſt, ſo the City was a type of Gods Ordinances where the people went up to Worſhip. Oh! that ſhould be in our eyes, the City where the Ordinances of God are, when we go to War let that be in our eyes, and let that make us fight valiantly, and when we are praying to God, let us not pray ſo much that we may be delivered from our Adverſaries, as that the Temple and the City of our God may be preſerved.*

1 King.
8 44.
enlightened

what ſhould
encourage
us to fight.

Again, further; In that it is ſaid, the *Inhabitants of Samaria* ſhould thus fear. From thence the Note is.

That Cities that are ſtrong and ſafe themſelves, ſhould be ſenſible of the miſeries of others. Oh! God knows how far we have been wanting in this very thing; If a ſtranger ſhould have come out of another Country into London, and walk about the ſtreets, could he have imagined that there were ſuch Civil Wars in this Land as there is, ſuch wonderful deſolations as hath been made in other parts? Oh! how little did we lay the afflictions of others to heart, becauſe they were at ſome diſtance from us? Oh! the mercy of our God that hath not brought us into the ſame evils and miſeries, this one ſin had been enough to have provok'd God

Obſ. 2.

A a a

againſt

against us, because we were so little sensible of other Countries and Cities that were about us. This wicked *Samaritis*, yet when they heard that *Bethel* and *Dan*, and their other Cities, when they heard what dangers they were in, Oh ! they were mightily affected with it. Learn we from hence to be humbled for our want this way, and if ever the Lord should yet try us further, let us learn to be sensible of the miseries of others that are about us.

Lastly, They are afraid because of their Calves : When their Calves are gone, all their Confidence is gone, and then their hearts are over-whelmed with fear. There is no staidness of heart in resting upon any thing but upon the living God. They that stay themselves upon any thing else, if any afflictions or dangers falls out, their hearts are fill'd with fear presently. When men have nothing to rest upon but their own inventions, their own waies, no mervail though they fear in times of danger : They begin to be think now that all is vanity to them that they rested upon ; yea, the service of God that men in times of prosperity can rest upon and can satisfy their consciences withal, yet in time of danger it will not do, no inventions of men, nor no external duties of Religion, especially such as are mixt with superstition, they will not uphold the heart in times of danger, but the heart will be overwhelmed ; it's only the confidence in the living God, the union of our souls with Jesus Christ, and enjoyment of communion with him in his own Ordinances that can comfort our souls in time of danger. But it's said of the Godly in *Psal. 112. 7.* *He shall not be afraid of evil tydings : his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.* His heart is established and he shall not be afraid. It's again repeated, let evil tydings, come what will, his heart is fixed, because he trusts in the Lord. It follows.

For the people thereof ſhall mourn over it.

The people thereof] Here he ſpeaks about the Calf of Bethaven in the ſingular Number, for ſo I find it's refer'd by moſt Interpreters, *The people of the Calf.* (Of it) not of *Samarita.* Expof.

From thence the Note would be thus, *That wicked men, Idolaters did dedicate themſelves to their Idols, they are the people of the Idol.* Thoſe that were the very peculiar of God and his Treafure, the People of God, now they are called the people of the Calf, for they have none to go to for help but only that Idol of theirs; they had forſaken God. Obf.

And it's ſaid, *That they yet mourn over it.* Though certainly at firſt, the ſetting up of the Calf could not but be a very ſtrange thing to the people of *Iſrael*, yet within a while after they were uſed to it, they did worſhip it, and it took their very conſciences, ſo as they loved it, and when it was taken away they mourn'd and were in extream diſtreſs and trouble. Idolaters they do mourn when their falſe worſhip is taken from them. At this day, my Brethren, how do many mourn after their ſuperſtitious vanities, their ſuperſtitious cuſtoms that they were wont to have? Now Prelates, and Service-Book, and Altars, and ſuch kind of things are taken away, when they come to meet together, Oh! now all Religion is gone: So they perſwade poor people in remote parts, that the *Parliament* hath taken away all Religion; and there is a great mourning in their ſpirits, they think they know not how in the world to ſerve God if their *Book* be taken away from them: and I make no queſtion it hath been a cauſe that many have taken up Arms, meerly to defend ſuch ſuperſtitious vanities and cuſtoms that they were wont to have. Their Burialls for the dead as they were wont to have, Oh! they mourn for this, and they would almoſt as lieve loſe their lives as ſuch kind of things as theſe are. I remember I have

Aaa 2

read

*Prelats,
Service-
book, and
Altars, all
ſome mens
Religion.*

*An Apes
Tooth.*

read of the *Indians* that were wont to worship an Apes Tooth, it was a Religious Relick among them, and it was taken from them, and there was a great mourning among them, so that they came and offered a very great price, that was valued at thousands to redeem but their Apes Tooth that was taken from them, because it was a Religious Relick. And so we have men this day, though their superstitious vanities and customs be no better than a very Apes Tooth, yet they mourn over them and would be willing to part with a great proportion of their estate to redeem them again, they mourn after their Calves.

*We should
mourn af-
ter the true
Worship.*

Oh! how should we mourn after the true Worship of God then, how deer should that be to our souls? For Calves, Superstitious Relicks, and Customs, Apes Teeth, and such things be so deer to Idolaters, Oh! those Ordinances of God in which our souls have met with so much soul-refreshings, and communion with God, and so much of the Spirit of God let out to our souls through them. Such enlightenings by them, Oh! how should we mourn after them? You that have gotten any thing by the Word, by the Ordinances of God, that ever hath known what it hath been to have communion with God in them, you should think with your selves, If these should be taken from me, then I should have cause to mourn indeed: I have lost much of my estate, and my friends many of them are lost, and these are cause of mourning, Oh! but if I should lose the Ordinances, and Worship of God, Oh! what cause would there be then of mourning? It follows.

And the Priests thereof that rejoyced on it.

כִּמְרִים The Priests they especially mourn. The word that is
Chema- here translated *Priests*, it is in the Hebrew *Chemarims*, and
rim what I find it signifies three things the word from whence it
it signifies comes.

I.

Chemar signifies to sound out, and so some think that it is

is they are call'd *Chemarims*, becauſe of their clamorous ſounds that they were wont to have in their ſuperſtitious worſhip: Juſt as we were wont to have Bellowing in their Cathedrals, ſo they were wont to have, and therefore they were call'd *Chemarims*, becauſe of their mighty noiſes and ſounds that they were wont to have.

Secondly, It ſignifies, to burn, or to be hot. And ſo *Luther* (I find) takes the word, and ſaith, That they were call'd *Chemarims* from their burning deſires after their waies of falſe worſhip.

But I rather think there is a third, that ſignifies to be *Black from burning*; becauſe thoſe things that are burnt, they are made *black*. When the flame firſt takes hold upon a thing it makes it black: and ſo *Chemarims* are as much as *black ones*, or indeed *Black Coats*; they were wont to be Black-known by their black garments, and therefore they are called by the name *Chemarims*, becauſe of their black garments that they were wont to uſe: and I find in 2 *King*. 23. 5. that this word that is here *Prieſts*, is there *Idolatrour Prieſts*, it's the ſame word. Thoſe *Black-Coats* that were then, they accounted it a kind of Religion to go in *Black*, from thence they would have the name. And though certainly it's fit for the Miniſters of the Goſpel to go gravely, and decently, and not to expreſs lightneſs and vanity in their garments, yet to put a kind of ſuperſtition upon *black*, as upon neceſſity they muſt wear black Coats, and no other garments will ſerve the turn: As heretofore there was a kind of ſuperſtitious vanity put on it. Now though gravity be required in their very garments, yet to ſtand ſo much upon the very colour there may be danger in it, and thoſe that are look'd upon as Religious men that ſhould differ any way from others, that they ſhould be tied and bound to it, I ſay, this there is an evil in it; they were wont

2.

3.

Coats.

[This is the

Rabbins interpretation of the word (and they apply it to the Popiſh Munks and Nuns) which Calvin rejects, and expounds it to ſignifie either their clamorous noiſe in worſhipping, as 1 King. 18. 27. or to be a common name whereby thoſe Idolatrour Prieſts were known as 2 King. 23. on which place ſee Munſter's Annotations.]

to

to do so here: and so almost all your Heathens and superstitious people they had alwaies a special colour for the garments of their Priests; as the Turks have their green for the colour of the garments of their Priests. But thus much only for the name *Chemarims*.

Their Priests that rejoyced.

Rejoyce] that is, *They that did exult over the Calves*, Oh! the Priests, the Calves made for them, they got the King to be on their side, and they made the Calves brave, and they had brave kind of Worship about it, and many pompous Ceremonies about it, and the Priests they gloried in this, for they had a special hand in all, and because they had the countenance of Authority for their Calves, that they were able to crush any that spake against them, they *exulted* the text saith.

But now there's a threatning, *That they shall mourn*, those Priests that did so glory in their Calves, as who were they that did glory so much in pompous Altars and other braveries but your Priests? they exulted and had all under them, and would quickly crush a man that should not yield to them, they did even brave it over all, and did even call themselves sometimes the *Triumphant Clergie*, just like your *Chemarims*; but now here they were like to lose all, and they should mourn over them.

Polanus
in loc.

Polanus upon this very place, for their *fat Livings*, and *Parsonages*, and such places, our Prelates, for their *Prebendaries*, and *Deanaries*, and *Bishopricks*, and such kind of Preferments: Oh! how do they mourn this day for the loss of these things? Thus they that did so rejoyce to expect Preferment, they are gone now, Oh! the world is at an end with them, and they mourn one to another because of the loss of such things as these are: and long may they mourn upon this ground. We read in *Revel. 18.* these kind of people just set forth, that upon the fall of *Babylon* the

Revel. 18.
applied.

the

the text ſaith, *That the Merchants of the earth ſhall weep and mourn over her : for no man buyeth their Merchandize any more.* And then in the 14. verſe, *The fruits that thy ſoul luſteth after are departed from thee :* and in the 15. verſe, *The Merchants of theſe things which were made rich by her, ſtood a far off, weeping and wailing.* Thoſe that were made rich by the Whore of Babylon ſtand a far off, weeping and wailing. And ſo thoſe that were made rich by the Prelates, and Superſtitious vanities, they ſtand a far off, weeping and wailing; and bleſſed be God that we ſee them to mourn that did ſo triumph and rejoyce over the people of God, but God hath made ſuch a change of things as now they hang down their heads and mourn, even becauſe of their Calves that are taken from them.

who mourneth moſt for ſuperſtitious places.

For the glory thereof is departed.

They ſought to make them as glorious as they could, and they accounted them very glorious. Now ſhall wicked men, Idolaters account their Idol Worſhip glorious, Oh ! how glorious ſhould the Worſhip of God be in our eyes, the true Spiritual Worſhip of God ? Let the true Miniſters of God learn not to glory in the fleſh, but deſire to know nothing but Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified.

Obſ.

The Glory thereof is departed.] For divers years together the worſhip of the Calves had a great deal of glory put upon them, but it went away. And ſo you know what glory was upon our Prelates and ſuch kind of Worſhip, as they of late ſet up, but the glory is departed. And took to it, what ever inventions of men are, if it be not Gods, the glory will depart from it.

VER. 6.

It shall be also carried unto Assyria for a Present to King Jareb.

Jareb.

WHAT King Jareb was you heard in the fifth Chapter: and his name signifies *an Helper*, as a Trophe. As now the King of France, *The most Christian King*. And so our King, *The Defender of the Faith*. And so King Jareb, the Helper. Now the Calves are to be sent to King Jareb, that was their help. Some think that they sent it for a Present; but the text will not bear that, but his Soldiers taking Dan and Bethel they rejoyced in getting the Calves, and sends them to King Jareb as a Trophe unto him, as that which they knew he would much rejoyce in, They rested much upon King Jareb as a help unto them, and now their kind of Religion, their very Religion is at Jarebs dispose, for he hath now the Calves in his hand to do with them what he will.

Obl.

From thence briefly our Note is this: *Our depending upon men for help, is dearly bought, if it comes to that, that they shall have the dispose of our Religion.* Jareb was their Helper, and they would have him to help them; but now their Calves are sent to him for a Present, and Jareb hath the dispose of them for their Religion that they had.

And then the second Note is this. In that they were sent to the King as a Present that he would rejoyce in.

Obf.

That it is the way of Idolaters, to rejoyce much when they get one anothers gods. As when the Philistims got the Ark, they rejoyced much, they carried it to *Dagons Temple*. Also the enemies of the Church will rejoyce much if they can get the power to trample upon our Religion; they will rejoyce much if they can get your estates, but they will rejoyce more if they can do what they will with you in the point of your Religion, Oh! this would be that which would make

Applied to
England.

make them glad at the very heart that they could diſpoſe of us for our Religion, Oh! let us know this beforehand that may make us cry to God the more earneſtly, that the Lord whatever he gives them power over, that he would not give them power over our Religion; for that's the thing that they moſt aim at.

Ephraim ſhall receive ſhame.

Hierom upon the place hath this tradition of the Jews. *Hierom.*
(Ple but name it to you) he ſaith, (that it was received among them) That the Priests of the Calves had taken away the golden Calves and put up Calves of braſs inſtead of them and only gilt them over with Gold, and now the King of Iſrael when he was in ſtraights ſent theſe Calves to King *Jareb* for a Preſent to pacifie his anger, now when he had ſent theſe Calves the King of *Aſſyria* made account that they were Calves of Gold, but afterwards when he found that they were of braſs, he ſent meſſengers to the King of *Iſrael* to tell him how he had but cozened him, and upon that, Oh the King and all the People were aſhamed. But this is but a tradition of theirs, and not very probable. But this I rather take to be the truth of it.

*See Schic-
wards Pro-
dromus, or
his Bechi-
nath Ha-
peruchim.*

They were aſhamed becauſe of their own Counſels.

That is, their hopes firſt ſhall fail them, and they ſhall ſee their counſels that they took ſhall come to nothing, and this ſhall cauſe ſhame and confuſion of face upon them. *Expoſ.*
The ten Tribes ſhall receive ſhame. Failing in our hopes that make us to be aſhamed. They had good hopes they ſhould prevail becauſe of their Calves, but now their Calves are taken from them, and now they are aſhamed, In *Job. 6.*
*20. They were confounded, becauſe they had hoped; they came thither, and were aſhamed: they hoped to have relief, but had not, and therefore they were aſhamed; the diſap-
pointment* *Iob. 6. 20.*

pointment of hopes causes great shame. Oh then ! what shame and confusion will there be at the great day when we shall be disappointed of our last hopes ? If we had been disappointed of our hopes now in respect of our Adversaries, Oh ! what shame would have been upon the People of God, our Adversaries they would have cast shame upon us, and said, What's become of your fastings and prayers ? As it's like the *Assyrians* did when they took the Calves, Oh ! now we have got your Gods (say they) and upon this the people were ashamed : and so if our Adversaries had prevailed they would have scorn'd in the like manner. My Brethren, we have cause to bless the Lord from our souls that he hath delivered us from such a temptation, from such a temptation lest we should be ashamed of our hopes, though the truth is, If we had right we should not have been ashamed, for our hopes was not so much in the saving of our estates as this, That God would own his Cause in the conclusion, and so our hopes would not have fail'd ; I but if our hopes had but seemed to have failed in outward appearance, that the Enemy should have prevailed, I say, it would have been a mighty temptation for us to have been ashamed of our hopes, Oh ! blessed be God for preventing this, that the Lord hath not made his People to be ashamed of their hopes, and prayers. The Ministers of God can stand up and look comfortably in the Congregations, because they put on people, and encouraged the hearts of people in this Cause ; and they have comfort to their souls in this, That when things were at the lowest yet still they could have their hopes in God, and believe yet in God that he would go on in such a Cause as this is, and the Lord hath not caused the expectation of his poor people to fail. But if it be shame (I say) now for the present to be disappointed of some hopes, Oh ! remember upon all your disappointment of hopes, Oh ! what shame would it be before men and Angels if it should prove that any soul in this place should be so disappointed of their last hopes ;

Ministers
may be glad

And (if al-
waies faith-
ful to the
Publick
Cause)
they may
take com-
fort.

hopes? Thou haſt hope of ſalvation, and of eternal life, and if it ſhould prove when all ſecrets are to be made publick before the Lord Jeſus and his Angels, if then it ſhould prove that all thy hopes were daſh'd, what would become of thee? It is the prayer of David, *O Lord, let me not be diſappointed of my hope.* Let that be thy prayer, eſpecially in regard of thy laſt hopes. In 1 Job. 2. 28. *Abide in him, that when he ſhall appear we may have confidence, and not be aſhamed before him at his coming.* Oh! that's the comfort of the Saints, that they ſhall not be aſhamed at the coming of Jeſus Chriſt: and many that are not aſhamed now yet at the coming of Jeſus Chriſt, Oh! the ſhame that ſhall be caſt upon them? But the main emphasis lies in the words that follow.

1 Job. 2.
28.

Israel ſhall be aſhamed of his own Counſels.

Now what was that Counſel? What? why it was this counſel: 1. The Counſel that was between Jeroboam & his Princes and the Priests, together with ſome eminent of the people, for the ſetting up of the way of falſe worſhip.

Expoſ.

1.

And ſecondly, For the forcing of al men that belonged to the ten Tribes to forbear going to *Jeruſalem*. This was thought a notable Plot, a notable Counſel, they thought this was the only Counſel to keep things in peace among them. Why (ſay they) if we ſhall ſuffer men, that every one that hath a fancy in his head, that they ſhall go to *Jeruſalem* to worſhip, we ſhall have nothing but conſuſion, and therefore let us take ſuch a courſe that people ſhall have a place to worſhip in, that they worſhip thus; it is but only ſome people that are ſo ſtriſt that they muſt needs worſhip in *Jeruſalem*, and therefore let us determine this, That we will have a conſtant way that every one ſhall be bound unto, and we will have no more going to this *Jeruſalem* to worſhip, but they ſhall be content to worſhip at *Dan* and *Bethel*, and this will keep things in peace. Now

2.

A Geogra-
phical de-
ſcription of
Politick
Counſels
in Religion

this counsel seem'd to be a fine plot to keep things in order. But saith the Lord, They shall be ashamed of it; though they think they have wise men, that do thus advise, sage men, and some men it may be that seem to have some good in them too, and stand for peace : thus it was a Counsel cried up mightily, yet the Lord he sits in Heaven and laughs at this Counsel, and saith he, *They shall be ashamed of their Counsels*; perhaps now whilst they are let go on and carry all before them, they bless themselves in their Counsel, and think it is a very excellent plot, and God favors it; but when my time shall come, when they shall see what evil it brings upon them, then they shall be ashamed of their Counsels. From thence there's these two Notes;

Obs. 1.

First, *That mens own Counsels bring them to shame, especially in matters of Religion.*

Obs. 2.

Secondly, *That men are strong in their own Counsels, till they see some eminent evil to come of them, and then they will be convinced and ashamed, but not before.*

To speak a little of each of these.

1 Doct.

Mens own Counsels bring shame to them, especially in Religion. For men naturally are very blind in the things of God, they do not see far in them; mens hearts are full of corruption, they are byass'd by their corruptions; seeing there's much self-love in men.

Reas. 1.

If there be any appearance that is mens own, that's much regarded, a great deal more than truth that is another mans; if it be their own they mind that, but let another man speak that which hath truth, that's little regarded. There is in mens hearts much violence to maintain their own Counsels, and therefore very like that their Counsels will bring them to shame. There's nothing that men can bear to be contradicted in, less than in their Counsels. And the more men are set upon their own Counsels the more it is like to bring shame in the conclusion.

Reas. 2.

And besides, There's a Judgment of God upon mens spirits,

ſpirits, that if they will ſet upon their own Counſels, I ſay, there's ordinarily a Judgment of God upon men to leave them to folly when they reſt upon their own Counſels: and it's threatned in *Pſal. 81.12.* as a great Judgment of God upon men, to give them up to their Counſels. Saith God, *Pſ. 81.12* *They would not hearken to my Counſel, therefore did I give them up to their own Counſel:* Oh! it's a terrible place: I beſeech you conſider of it; Theſe are times wherein every one is plotting, Oh! tremble at that text; *I gave them up unto their OWN COUNSELS:* Mens own Counſels bring them to ſhame, often times they come to nothing; after they have made a great deal of do, and they will do this, and they will go on, at length it comes to nothing, ſo that they are ſain to ſit down and there's an end of all their labor and ſtir, perhaps they have labored to put on their Counſels by much evil, much ſin, much heart burning, and when it comes to all, there it lies, there's an end of it; thus they are aſhamed of their counſels. Yea, many times the Counſels of men work quite contrary; God doth much glory in this, in making uſe of mens own Counſels to bring them into ſnares. What hath brought our Adverſaries into ſnares but their own Counſels? What brought the Prelates down but their own Counſels? So that they would bite their very fingers for what they did in their Proteſtation. God hath been pleaſed to deal thus graciouſly for us, to bring our enemies into ſnares by their own Counſels: in *Job, 18. 7.* 'tis verified of many that their *Job, 18. 7.* own Counſels have caſt them down. And *Pſal. 9.* toward the *Pſa. 9. 16.* latter end, *The wicked is ſnared in the work of his OWN HANDS:* Higgajon Selah. You have not thoſe two words put together in all the Book of God beſides. That is, Oh! 'tis a thing to be meditated on very much, the wicked is ſnar'd in the work of his own hands. Oh! think of this, conſider of this, Oh! the work of God in bringing men down by their own Counſells (ſaith the text.)

Mens own
Counſels
inſnare the
Inſtanced
in the late
Enemy,
And the
Prelats.

Real. 3. And just it may be so; for men provoke God by their
 Psal. 106. Counsels, in Psalm. 106. 43. Oh! the Lord looks upon
 43. the Counsels of men, and is much provoked by them, and
 therefore just it is with him to make their Counsels to be a
 snare so to them, as that they should be ashamed of them at
 the last. It concerns us therefore (my Brethren) to look to
 our Counsels what they are. I'll give you a few Rules a-
 bout your Counsels that you may not be ashamed of them.

1. What to
 avoid.

1. False
 principles.

First, Keep out from your Counsels those things that
 would hinder you.

2. Wicked
 men.

Job, 21.

16.

Cap. 22. 18

1. Be sure to keep out of your Counsels your false Prin-
 ciples, be not acted in your Counsels by false Principles.

2. Keep out of your Counsels wicked men, take heed that
 they do not joyn with you in your Counsels, in Job. 21. 16.
Their good is not in their hand: the counsel of the wicked is far
from me. and so in Job, 22. 18. Oh! keep out wicked men
 from your Counsels.

3. Selfends

3. Keep out your Own Ends, take heed how they come
 in: If any of a mans Ends come into his Counsels, they wil
 warp then.

4. Con-
 ceiptedness

4. Keep out of your Counsels *Conceitedness*, and *Pride*;
 when you come to Counsel, Oh take heed of a conceited
 spirit, in leaning to your own understanding; God doth
 use to blast such.

5. Flesh &
 blood.

5. Keep out of your Counsels *flesh and blood*. I consul-
 ted not with *flesh and blood*, saith Paul in the first Chap. to
 the Galatians: I did not look unto carnal excellency, but
 laid aside all carnal kind of excellency; they would have
 advised me to this and this, and I should never have done as
 I did if I had consulted with flesh and blood.

6. Passion
 and Fro-
 wardness.

Job, 5. 13.

6. Yea, keep out of your Counsels *Passion* and *frowardness*.
 In Job, 5. 13. *He taketh the wise in their own craftiness; and the*
counsel of the froward is carried headlong. If once you find in

your Counsels your hearts begin to be hot, rather break

Resolve on
 nothing in
 heat.

off; take heed of such resolutions in your Counsels as are in
 a heat: It's a safe way for you if you would consult about
 business

buſineſs of Moment, aſſoon as there begins to be a heat, rather fall to prayer; we had need of cool and quiet ſpirits when we are conſulting: As if you would weigh a thing exactly with Gold Scales (as in Councils we ſhould weigh things very exactly) you would not weigh in the miſt of a wind: when mens paſſions begin to be up they weigh things as a man ſhould weigh Gold abroad in the wind: but you cannot weigh exactly. Oh! take heed of paſſion in your Councils.

ſimile.

Divers other things there are that ſpoyle our Councils that we ſhould be aware of. And if we would have our Councils right, then obſerve theſe further Rules in your Councils:

2. What we ſhould attend in our Councils.

1. Be ſure to look up firſt to Jeſus Chriſt that great Counſellor. He is called in *Iſa. 9.* THE COUNSELLOR: it's he that is wonderful in Counſel: God hath given a ſmile to his Son to be *The Counſellor*, he is to be the Counſellor of thy Soul for thy Eternal Eſtate, yea, and to be thy Counſellor for all matters of Religion, and the Worſhip of God, look up to him.

1. Look to Chriſt. *Iſa. 9. 6.*

And pray much. If you would not have your Counſels miſcarry, pray much. In *Prov. 8. 14.* Counſel is mine (ſaith Wiſdom.) It's ſpoken of Chriſt. It's very obſervable that ſome note of the Counſel of *Achitophel*, and the Counſel of *Huſhai*: The Counſel of *Achitophel*, the truth is, if we examine it, it was the wiſer Counſel of both, and *Absalom* loved *Achitophel* exceedingly, and his Counſel was ordinarily accounted as the Oracle of God, yet at ſuch a time (becauſe God had an intent to bring down his Counſel) that was rejected, and the Counſel of *Huſhai* was imbrac'd, and he did hear the prayer of *David* when he prayed, *Lord turn the Counſel of Achitophel into folly*. And let us pray much that God would be with our COUNSELLORS, that there may be none there that may be like thoſe that are ſpoken of in *Ezek. 11. 2.* *Theſe are they that give evil Counſel in the City*, and that likewiſe the Lord would ſway Counſels, and that

2. Pray much. *Prov. 8. 14.*

Ezek. 11. 2.

men

men may yeeld to that that is the safest and the best Counsell, to that that is best in the eyes of God. Many times when a Company meet together, there are som things that are darted in that are neglected by the Company, whereas if God were with them, to guide them, that thing (it may be) would sway all their Counsels: and pray much, *Guide me with thy Counsel, and so bring me to glory, Psalm. 73. 24.* Oh! especially in matters that concern our Souls and Religion, we should pray much that God would guide us by his Counsel, and so bring us to Glory.

Pf. 73. 24

3. Let the fear of God be strong.

3. If you would have your Counsels right, *Let the fear of God be strong in your hearts when you come to counsel.* Oh! it's a good thing when any are going to Counsel about matters of consequence, that they would prepare their hearts before they go with the possession of the fear of the great God upon their hearts, and then they will counsel well: you have a notable Scripture for this in *Ezra, 10. 3.* *Come, let us go to do according to the Counsel of my Lord, and of those that tremble at the Commandement of our God.* It may be there are some that have deeper reaches than they have; I, but have they the fear of God in them? here is hope that they are guided by the Lord, and therefore let us do according to the Counsel of those that tremble at Gods Word; Do you see a man whose heart is possess'd with the fear of God and his Word? if his parts be but ordinary you may expect that God will be with him rather than with those that are bold and presumptuous, and slight the Word of God.

Ezr. 10. 3.

4. Look at the Word, especially in matters of Religion.

4. In your Counsels (especially in matters of Religion) be sure to look at the Word; and think not thus, In way of reason and prudence such a way were better, and would conduce for peace: As I remember *Luther* hath such an expression, Reason is a most deadly enemy even to Faith, it is dangerous to reason matter of Faith. And so in the matters of the Worship of God, there's a great deal of danger. Keep to the Word therefore in all your Counsels, and labor for sincerity of heart in all your Counsels: this is that that

that makes men miſcarry in their Counſels, their hearts are byaſſed with ſome luſt or other, and therefore when any thing is ſpoken to them that is ſutable to what they have a mind to, that they imbrace; and if any thing be ſpoken to them that is otherwiſe, that they reject: Oh! it's juſt with God to answer thee according to the Idol that is ſet up in thy own heart.

5. In all thy Counſels, *Take heed of being put off with ſome fair ſhews.* When the Lord is leaving any, yet he will ſuffer thoſe that give evil Counſel to mix a great many good things with that which is evil: As ſome that will put a few braſs ſhillings into a great bag of money, the other is all good currant money, yea but here's ſome braſs ſhillings put amongſt it. So ſometimes in the miſt of a great deal of good Counſel, there is a little mixture that may turn all: therefore thoſe that would counſel, eſpecially the publick affairs, they had need have their eyes about them, and poiſe every word and line, and examine every particular, or otherwiſe they may quickly come to be aſham'd of their own Counſel.

5. Be not put off with ſhews of Reaſon.

There are many Rules might further be given.

6. God hath promiſed to direct the humble, therefore come with humility in your counſels, and be ſure in what is right to follow: and then you may with the more confidence expect God ſhould help you in other things.

6. Be humble.

7. Conſult with indifferent judgment.

7.
8.

8. If the thing touch others, think what we would have if we were in their caſe.

9. Whether it may not coſt too dear, though good. Conſider whether the attaining of it, though good, may not occasion ſo much evil, as it is not worth it: if it be not of preſent neceſſity (*non deliberand. de neceſſariis*) the rubs attending it may ſhew it is not good at this time, or not thus, or not for me.

9.

They shall be ashamed of their own Counsels.

2. Doct.

Sr Walter
Rawlegh.

When they are come to times of affliction they shall be ashamed of their own Counsels. Times of affliction makes men ashamed of what they would not be ashamed of before, Jer. 2. 26. Zeph. 3. 11. I remember a notable expression that Sr. *Walter Rawlegh* hath in his Story; *When death comes (saith he) which hates men and destroys men; when that comes, that's believed; But God that loves men, and makes men, he is not regarded. Oh Eloquent! Oh! Mighty Death! whom none could advise, thou art able to persuade.* That's thus, men that would never be persuaded by any thing else to believe that they were not right, yet when death appears that can persuade them: now afflictions are an evil, but how eloquent are afflictions? what power have afflictions to persuade men that they were wrong, that would not be persuaded by all the arguments in the world before? *Then they shall be ashamed of their own Counsels.* Oh! I beseech you let us take heed of this, let not us go on headily in our own Counsels till God bring us into misery, and then we should be forced to cry out of our own Counsels and be ashamed of them.

VER. 7.

As for Samaria her King is cut off, as the foam upon the water.

Expos.

AS for Samaria her King is cut off, as the foam upon the waters.

Before God threatned that they should be ashamed of their Counsels, and what that Counsel was I told you. Ashamed of our Counsel, we hope not, we shall maintain it, our King is for us, he will venture his life, his Kingdom, but he will maintain us in our way.

Your King (saith the Prophet) he shall be as foam upon the water, even the King of Samaria.

Yea,

Yea, but our King is in a ſtrong Town, in *Samaria*, a great City, and ſuch a ſtrong City as was able to hold ſiege for three yeers together; and yet the King of *Samaria* though he had gotten the chief City in the Kingdom to be fully for him, and ſo much victuals and ſtrength as he could hold out for three yeers, yet (ſaith the Lord) *He ſhall be as the foam upon the Waters.*

As foam.

The word that is tranſlated *Foam*, ſometimes ſignifies the foam that is in a man that is extremely angry, ſo you have it in *Zach. 1. 2.* Oh the King when he was croſt he was in a foam. Your King that is croſt and doth foam in anger when he is croſt, he ſhall be as foam upon the water (ſaith God.) Now the Note that is from hence it is this;

נִפְּחַת

Zach. 1. 2.

That ungodly men in their greateſt power and rage, yet if God comes upon them, are nothing but as foam, are poor weak creatures that vaniſh and come to nothing. The foam when the waters makes a noiſe, is above it, and hath a great ſhew above the waters, but ſtay a while and it is vaniſh'd and comes to nothing. Your King that rages and is above others, and thinks he hath a great deal of power; ſtay a while he comes to nothing. The Scripture compares men in their greateſt power to things of the greateſt vanity; there are in Scripture, that I'll mention to you, a matter of 19. or 20. ſeveral particulars wherein the Scripture compares men in their greateſt power, unto that which hath nothing but vanity: yea there are ſuch expreſſions in Scripture, to ſet out the meaneſs, vileness, and baſeneſs of men in the greateſt power, that it would make Chriſtians that underſtand Scripture, & that is of the ſame judgment wth their Father, with God, as he hath reveal'd himſelf in his Word, never to be afraid of the power of men. I'll name them diſtinctly to you thus:

The benefit of obſerving the Scriptures expreſſions touching the vanity of great perſons.

1. First, The Scripture sometimes calls even Kings and great ones, *A meer noise*, nothing more, in *Jeremiah*, 46. 17. *Pharaoh King of Egypt, is but a noise. That's the first.*
2. Secondly, They are but as *small dust*, in *Isa.* 29. 5. *The multitude of thy strangers shall be like small dust.*
Yea, Thirdly, They are but as *chaff*, in the same place *Isa.* 29. 5. *The terrible ones shall be as chaff that passeth away in an instant.* Who would be afraid of a noise, small dust, and chaff?
4. Fourthly, They are as *nothing*, in *Isa.* 41. 11. *Behold, all they that are incensed against thee, shall be as nothing.*
5. Fifthly, They are as *Tow*; put a little fire to Tow and it quickly comes to nothing. In *Isa.* 1. 31.
6. Sixthly, They are as *dung*, in *Psal.* 83. 10. *As the dung of the Earth.*
7. Seventhly, They are as *straw* that is troden for dung, in *Isa.* 25. 10. *As straw troden for the dunghil.*
8. Eighthly, They are compared sometimes to a beast that hath a *hook in his nostrils*, in *Isa.* 37. 20. *God will put a hook in his nostrils; now who would be afraid of a beast that hath a hook put into his nostrils?*
9. Ninthly, They are as *stubble*, and as *stubble fully dry*, ready for the fire, in *Nahum.* 1. 10.
10. Tenthly, They are as *rottenness*, and their root is rottenness *Isa.* 5. 24.
11. And then, they are as *scum*, in *Ezek.* 24. 12. *And as scum ready for the fire.*
12. And then again, They are as *smoke* in *Psal.* 68. 2. they are as *smoke that is drie.*
13. And then they are as *Grass*, as *green grass*, as *grass on the house tops*, and as *Corn blasted before it is grown up*; all these you have together in *Isa.* 37. 27.
14. And then they are as *Wax that melts before the fire*, in *Psal.* 68. 2.

Yea,

Yea, They are as the *fat of Lambs*, in *Pſal.* 37. 20. 15.

They are as a *worm*, in *Job*, 25. 6. 16.

They are *vanity*, *Lighter than vanity*, altogether in their
beſt eſtate *vanity*, *Pſal.* 39. 5. 17.

They are as *ſnow melting before the Sun*. In *Job*, 24. 18.

19. They are as the *light of a Candle that is preſently put out*
Prov. 24. 20. 19.

And then laſtly, They are a *Lye*: even great men and
Princes, for it's ſpoken of them in *Pſal.* 62. 9. 20.

Thus my Brethren, we ſee how the Scripture heaps up
expreſſion upon expreſſion. It might have been very pro-
fitable to have inſiſted upon al theſe particulars, and to have
opened them, to ſhew you how contemptibly the Holy-
Ghoſt doth ſpeak of men in their great power.

Now if we could gather theſe Scriptures together, and
put them all into one, and ſo preſent the power of great
men to us, and by theſe things have the ſame judgment of
them that God hath, it would mightily help us from the
fears of men. *As for Samaria her King is cut off as the foam*
upon the waters.

Uſe.

V E R. 8.

*The high places alſo of Aven, the ſin of Iſrael ſhall be de-
ſtroyed: the Thorn and the Thistle ſhall come up upon
their Altars.*

I Confels from theſe words to the end of the Ele-
venth Verſe, there appears at the firſt reading, much
obſcurity; yet they are like unto a Mine, that the out-ſide
of it is barren, but dig within, and you ſhall find rich
Treasure.

Iſrael, the ten Tribes did conſide in two things, and ſo
ſtrengthened themſelves againſt what the Prophet could
ſay againſt them; the firſt was in the power of their King.
now that's gon, that's as *foam*, ſaith God, never conſide
there

Two propo-
ſitions of Iſ-
rael's confi-
dence.

there in the power of the King, and think that will bear you out, for he shall be as *foam*.

But the second was their Sacrifices that they offered, and their Devotion, their Religion, they were a Religious people, and they were very costly in their Devotion, they confided much in that: Well for the second, saith the Lord, *The high places of Aven, the sin of Israel shall be destroyed, the Thorn and the Thistle shall come up on their Altars*. Though they were never so pompous in their eyes, yet they are the high places of *Aven*; they were called before *Beth-aven* [the house of Vanitie,] now it is called *Aven*, [vanitie it self:] That place was no other than *Bethel*, whose name signified the house of God, where one of the Calves was set up; Now the name of this place did a great deal of hurt among the people; Oh! to go up to *Bethel*, the house of God; therefore God would take away that name, and calls it *Beth-aven* first, and then calls it *Aven*, that is, instead of calling it the house of God, I will have it called the house of vanitie, yea, vanitie it self. *Aven* signifieth vanitie, yea iniquitie it self; from whence note, "That God stands much upon taking people off from specious and glorious names, that are put upon any things that are made use of in ways of false worship, he stands much upon it" For, whereas before he had changed it from *Bethel* to *Beth-aven*, he changes it now from *Beth-aven* to *Aven*; God would obliterate the name of *Bethel*, and would make it to be accounted by the people to be nothing but iniquitie and vanitie. As for *The high places*, we have spoken to formerly.

The sin of Israel.

The sin, that is, in the very abstract, *sin*; 'tis more than if he should say, the sinfull things of Israel, the very sin of Israel.

The more any thing comes to have the nature of sin, the more vile and abominable it is. Therefore God expresseth it by

an

Bethaven.
Aven.
Bethel.

Vanitas
ini-
quitas,
labor.
Obs. 1.

Obs. 2.

an expreſſion that ſhould come as near the nature of ſin it ſelf, as he could to make it abominable. *Their ſin*, that is their Idolatrous worſhip.

Their falſe worſhip, it is the great ſin; and it was the greater ſin in *Iſrael*, becauſe that their holineſs did eſpecially conſiſt in inſtituted worſhip, their holineſs was typical, and much ſtood in inſtituted worſhip; it's true, God would have true holineſs if ever they came to Heaven, but that holineſs upon which they were called, a holy people, it was in their inſtituted worſhip, and it was typical, to ſet forth the true holineſs that ſhould be in all the Members of the Church now, therefore God was much provoked with their pollutions in inſtituted worſhip, their holineſs conſiſted ſo much in it. Obſ. 3.

And then further, In that their Idols, and their creatures that they abuſed to ſin are here call'd, *Their Sin*, the Sin of *Iſrael*.

You may note that, *We may ſo abuſe the creatures of God as not only to make them ſinful to us*, but even to turn them into ſin (as it were;) thus many men abuſe their bodies ſo that they may be call'd ſin its ſelf. Obſ. 4.

Well, that which they accounted holy you ſee God he accounts not only ſinful, but *ſin*, and ſaith it ſhall be deſtroyed.

It ſhall be deſtroyed.

When any Ordinances of God are abuſed, they are but to be purged. But if they be inventions of men they are to be deſtroyed. They ſhall be deſtroyed, *The ſin of Iſrael ſhall be deſtroyed.* We muſt learn for ever to take heed of meddling with, or putting any thing of our own in the place of Gods Worſhip; we may think in reaſon this may be good, as well as that; we ſee no evil in this, why may not this way be as good as that way? Yea, but God he looks upon things according as he himſelf requires them; and therefore

Calvin
in loc.

fore Calvin I remember upon this place (saith) God he pronounces that sin and sacriledg, and would have it destroyed, those things that may please us; let us therefore rest in his judgment, it's not our part to dispute (saith he) about matters of Worship, we must not dispute, & say, Why may not this be? and this may be for a good use, and a great deal of good may come of it, we must not stand disputing with God, and debating the matter with God, for though it may be very specious in our eyes, yet it may be very odious and abominable to the eyes of God.

It shall be destroyed.

Obs. 6.

Even all those things that evil men makes use of for sin shall one day be taken from them, you shall not alwaies have the creatures of God to abuse them to sin, there will be a time when God will deliver his creatures from this vanity that they are subject to. And then lastly.

They shall be destroyed.

Obs. 7.

Mans sin brings destruction upon the creatures. It is as poyson in a glasse that causes the glasse to be broken and cast upon the dunghil.

The Thorn and the Thistle shall come up on their Altars.

1.

Expos.

This expression is, to note, the great vastation that shall be made in those places where they had Altars in Bethel: (specially, Samaria being besieged for 3. years together.) The enemies had Bethel in their own hands and they manifested their rage upon their Altars, and upon all their Religious things presently, they pull'd them down and made them lie in heaps of rubbish, that in the space of three years the very thistles and thorns grew up in the place where they had their Alters. It's a usual expression of the devastation of a place, that the grass shall grow where their houses were, there shall Corn grow where the City was, here there shall be Thistles and thorns grow where their Altars were. And

And ſecondly, It's an expreſſion of indignation, as if God ſhould have ſaid, I'll take more delight to ſee the Thorns and Thistles grow out of the very rubbiſh of the Altars than of all the Images and brave pictures and gildings that are about them. Juſt as if it ſhould have been ſaid about the *Service-Book*, Oh now you honor it much, and it muſt be bound bravely, and gilt bravely, and ſtrung curiouſly, if one ſhould have ſaid about ſeven or eight years ago, This that you do ſo Idolize now, within a while it ſhall be but waſt papers, it ſhall be thrown to the Mice and Rats to eat, this would have been an expreſſion of indignation againſt it.

Obſ. Firſt, If it be ſad that places of false worſhip ſhould not be frequented as formerly they were wont to be, how much more ſad is it that places of true worſhip ſhould be neglected? as thus, They were wont to go to Bethel to worſhip with their Altars: yea, but ſaith God, they ſhall go no more thither, but thoſe places ſhall be fill'd with Nettles, Thorns, and and Thistles; they accounted that ſad. Yea, but we ſhould account it ſad that the paths to the true Worſhip of God ſhould not be beaten, as in former times where there was an Altar (as it were) for the Worſhip of God, thoſe places that were frequented much; but had our Adverſaries had their wills we ſhould have had thoſe paths that were wont to be beaten to the true Worſhip of God, to have had Nettles and Thorns grown up in them. Obſ. 1.

Secondly, If it be ſo ſad to have ſuch an ill ſucceſſion here in false worſhip, ſad to false worſhipers, what ſadneſſ is there for the true Worſhipers of God to have an ill ſucceſſion in the Church? Truly much like me thinks it is, when there hath been in a place a godly and a powerful Miniſtry, and afterwards for the ſins of the people God takes it away, and inſtead of a powerful Miniſtry there comes up a pricking Thorn, a Bryar, a Thistle, a Nettle, there comes an unworthy man of no gifts or graces, but only can gall and prick, and do hurt and miſchief, this is a ſucceſſion like to the ſucceſſion Obſ. 2.

D d d

that

that God here threatned, that there should be Thistles and Thorns succeed their Altars. And *Hierom* upon the place seems to him some such kind of meditation, he saith, instead of true Doctrine, there shall be a wilderness of very corrupt Doctrine, where there was true Doctrine taught, now it shall lie wast as a wilderness, and corrupt Doctrine shall be taught instead of true.

*Solitude
pessimæ
doctrinæ.
Hier. in
loc.*

Obs. 3.

Thirdly, *God doth account the ruin of the most glorious things abused to sin, a more pleasing object, than when those things were in the greatest pomp and glory.* Brave building, and brave Altars when they were rubbish and grown over with Thorns, and Bryars, God lookt upon them as more glorious. And so if a man hath a very beautiful comely body and abuse it to sin, when God shall strike him, and he shall be a filthy rotten carcase that the worms shall be gnawing upon, when he shall be covered with worms as a filthy carcase, God will look upon that as a more lovely sight than to see his body deck'd with all kind of ornaments. Better that the creature perish than to have it abused to sin, though it be the most glorious creature in the world.

Mens abused bodies.

*Better the
creature
perish than
be abused.*

Obs. 4.

And then lastly, *Those things that men account highly of in the matters of Worship, when God lets in their enemies they condemn them.* They accounted highly of their Calves, but when the *Assyrians* came they condemn'd them, and pull'd them down, and made them rubbish. It's not only so in matters of false worship, but in matters of true; those things that we highly esteem and bless God for, and we think what infinite pity it is that they should not be continued, yet if God should let our Adversaries in they would scorn us. As now, such liberties as these are, what infinite pity were it that people should be deprived of them, but if God should let our Adversaries in upon us they would scorn and condemn these things, as the *Assyrians* did condemn those things that the *Israelites* did account to be as God. It follows.

They

*They ſhall ſay to the Mountains, Cover us, and to the Hills,
Fall on us.*

This is an expreſſion to ſhew, Firſt, the dreadfulneſs of their miſery. It ſhould be ſuch a great miſery as ſhould make them be weary of their lives, ſhould make them rather deſire death than life. Expoſ. 1.

Secondly, It is to note the wonderful deſperation that in the apprehenſion and ſence of this their miſery they had no whither to go for help, but their hearts ſhould diſpair, and all the help that they ſhould expect was, to have the Mountains fall upon them, and the Hills to cover them. Now this expreſſion I find Chriſt makes uſe of in the ſetting out the miſery of the deſtruction of the *Jews* by the *Romans* afterwards, in *Luke*, 23. 30. and ſo I find the holy Ghoſt in expreſſing the miſery of the *Antichriſtian* party, when the wrath of God ſhould come out upon them, their miſery ſhall be ſo great, as to cry to the Mountains to fall upon them, and the Hills to cover them, in *Revel.* 6. 16. there the Princes and the great men, and mighty men, and Captains, they call upon the Mountains to fall upon them and the Hills to cover them. I remember reverend Mr. *Brightman* upon that very Scripture interpreting, the great men, and the mighty men calling to the mountains to fall upon them, and the hills to cover them, he ſaith, That it was fulfil'd in the time of *Conſtantine*, when the Heathen Emperors were vanquiſhed, and he doth interpret it upon *Diocleſian* that he was ſo terrified in apprehenſion of the wrath of the Lamb that Chriſt did appear againſt him, that he drank poyſon and kild himſelf. And *Maximian* ended his life with a halcar, and hanged himſelf. *Galerius* died of a moſt noiſom and filthy diſeaſe. *Maximinus* that he might prevent his death he likewiſe murdered himſelf. And ſo *Maxentius* ran into the bottom of *Tiberis* to hide himſelf there. And thus they did ſeek by ſeveral waies

Luke, 23.
30.

Rev. 6. 16

See Mr
Brightm.
in *Revel.*
6. 16.

to hide themselves from the sight of the Lamb by violent deaths.

I suppose all of you do understand clearly that it is meant an expression of great anguish and desperation; but yet that we may see why the holy Ghost makes use of this expression rather than others, and to find out the reason of it, you must know that the expression doth arise from hence; the Land of *Canaan* (where the Prophet here Prophesies) it was a Land full of Mountains and Hills, and these Mountains were stony and rocky (many of them) and they were wont therefore to dig places in the mountains that were stony and rocky for safety in case they should be in any great danger, to dig such holes that they may run into, and that by their narrow passage they might be able to keep out an enemy from them; and therefore I remember I find in *Josephus* 14. Book of *Antiquities*, 27. Chap. and so his Book of the *Jewish Wars*, the 1. Book, and 12. Chap. he saith, That those that were Theeves and Robbers they would make use of such Caves and Dens in the Mountains and Hills; and now to these the Scripture doth allude, and by this you may be helped to understand divers places of Scripture, in *Isa. 2. 19.* *And they shall go into the holes of the Rocks, and into the caves of the Earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majesty, when he arises to shake terribly the Earth.* They should go then into the holes of the Rocks and caves of the Earth, for they were wont to use such things there much. And so that Scripture in *Psal. 11. 1.* *In the Lord put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your Mountain?* In times of danger they were wont to flee to those Mountains. And so in *Psal. 121. 1.* *I will lift up mine eyes unto the Hills from whence cometh my help:* not only to the Temple, but to the Hills, because in time of danger they were wont to think of the Hills: But (saith David) I lift up my heart to God, and that shall be to me instead of an hundred holes in Hills. And in *Psal. 36. 6.* *Thy Righteousness is like the great Mountains.* It's not only because

The Land
of Canaan.

The custom
of the Jews
in time of
danger.

Josephus
Antiq. lib.
14. cap. 27
De Bello
Judaic. lib.
1. cap. 12.

Isa. 2. 19.
Illustrated

Pf. 11. 1.
also.

Pf. 121. 1.
in like
manner.

Pf. 36. 6.
by the same

because

because the Mountains ſtand ſteadily and ſtrongly, but be-
 cauſe the Mountains were places of refuge and ſhelter. So
 the Saints have refuge in the faithfulneſs of God, as they
 did run to the holes in the Mountains, and therefore God
 is call'd a ſtrong Rock that the Righteous run to; why?
 not only becauſe a Rock is ſtrong and cannot be removed,
 yea, but what ſafety is there: Suppose a man run to the
 Rock, cannot the enemies follow him and take him in the
 Rock? Therefore it is not only meant when it is ſaid, God
 is as a Rock, not only becauſe the faithfulneſs of God is
 ſteady as a Rock, but becauſe they had caves and holes in
 the Rocks that they were wont to run to in time of danger,
 therefore God is call'd a Rock. And ſo, *The ſtrength of the*
Hills is his alſo, in *Pſal.* 95. 4. Theſe Scriptures we may un-
 derſtand by this, by underſtanding the manner what they
 were wont to do in their Mountains. In *Pſal.* 94. 22. *But*
the Lord is my defence, and my God is the Rock of my refuge.

And Pſal.
 95. 4.

with Pſal.
 94. 22.

But yet further, that we may underſtand the meaning of
 this expreſſion: Becauſe when in times of danger they ran
 to the Mountains, and to the Rocks, and Holes, into their
 Caves, they conſidered when they were there, Oh! the e-
 nemy if he ſhould come upon us, how ſad would our con-
 dition be? Oh! that rather this Mountain that is now o-
 ver us, I would rather that it ſhould ſink down and fall
 upon me than the enemy ſhould take me, and this Hill
 that I am got into a hole of, for my refuge, it were well
 if this ſhould ſink down and preſs me to nothing. This I
 take to be the meaning of this Phraſe, & the riſe of it; they
 deſpiſed the Mountain of God, the going up to his Moun-
 tain, but now they would be glad to have ſo much uſe of
 theſe Mountains that they might cruſh them in pieces.
 From thence there are theſe Notes.

First, Oh! *the Alteration that God can make in Cities and*
Kingdoms: They who were proud and ſcornful ere while,
 are now ſo diſtreſſed as would think themſelves happy to
 be cruſh'd by Mountains and Hills.

Obſer.

Secondly,

Obs. 2. Secondly, Hence we may learn how great is the misery of falling into the hands of our enemies, for that's the meaning; when the *Affyrians* should come against them, and they were besieged for three years together, they knew how savagely the Enemies had used others in the Country, so that they desired to die under the Mountains rather than to fall into their hands; the great misery there is in falling into the hands of Enemies. And I remember *Josephus* in one of the forenamed places gives us a notable story of this, he tells us of some that did run into the Mountains and Holes for safety, and *Herod* he pursued them, and among others there was an old man, and he had seven Children and his Wife with him, but rather than he would fall into *Herods* hands, he call'd his Children one by one unto the mouth of the Cave that he had made in the Mountain, and when one came he kil'd that before the Enemy, and he cal'd another and kill'd him, and so he did till he had killed all the seven, and killed them Himself, and afterwards his Wife, and when he had cast their dead bodies down the Rock, he threw himself down head-long after them, and so he slew himself, and all this rather than he would fall into the hands of his Enemies. Certainly there is wonderful misery. Some of you perhaps have seen or felt somewhat, but that that you have felt and seen hath been nothing to what was like to be, had the Enemies gotten full power; He was fain to deal fairly to get people to himself, but cruelty doth break out now and then; and by that you may see what should have been generally if the Lord should deliver you into the power of the Enemy: Let us bless God then that we are delivered from that, that we have no such cause to cry out to the Mountains to cover us and the Hills to fall upon us.

Obs. 3. Thirdly, The wrath of God, Oh! how dreadful is it? there is nothing so fearful as the wrath of God: One would think that, that which these poor people should desire here should be dreadful enough, to have the Mountains fall upon

on them, and the Hills to cover them: Oh! but 'tis not ſo dreadful as Gods wrath; take all the terrors in the world they are nothing to the wrath of the Almighty when that is apprehended: ſometimes the wrath of God lies more heavie upon a mans Conſcience than a thouſand Mountains: And (my brethren) if it be ſo dreadful in outward judgments, how dreadful is it like to be when it ſhall come to be fully powred out upon the wicked and ungodly? In Revel. 9.6. *They ſhall ſeek for death, and ſhall not find it; they ſhall deſire to die, and death ſhall flee from them* (ſaith the text) Oh! when Gods wrath appears againſt the ungodly, it will be dreadful, eſpecially when the full vials of it comes to be powred out.

Rev. 9. 6.

And further, *To live in miſery is worſe than preſent dreadful death: to live in a lingring way of miſery is worſe than preſent death even in this world.* I remember Suetonius tells of Tiberius Caſar, that there was one that he had adjudged to death, and he that was adjudged to die, petitioned to him, that he might have his diſpatch. He anſwers him thus, Sir, you and I are not friends yet, you muſt not die, you muſt be kept in miſery. It is worſe than death many times to be kept in a lingring way of miſery, it is ſo, even in regard of the miſeries of this world, Oh! how much worſe than death is it then to be kept under the wrath of God to all eternity? How fearful is it to live in miſery for ever then, and never to die? Why it's better, certainly Sence would apprehend it better for a man to be diſpatcht preſently than to live in lingring miſery: yet, if we did know all, it were better to live in the greateſt miſery in the world (for a wicked man) than to die the faireſt death; thou wert better to live as a Dog, a Toad, yea, as a ſtock-log at the back of the fire (if it were poſſible) than to die, if thou kneweſt all (being a wicked man) but however hereafter in Hell, then it were better if it were poſſible to periſh than to live ſo as thou haſt, yet then thou ſhalt not die, though it would be the greateſt happineſs to thee, if thou ſhouldeſt after a thouſand

Obf. 4.

Suetonius
L. 3. C. 6.
*Nondum
tecum in
gratiam
redii.*

land yeers cry to God, Oh Lord, that Mountains might fall upon me ! The Lord would answer : You and I are not friends yet ; and if after a thousand years more thou shouldest cry, Oh Lord that I might be crush'd to pieces : the Lord would answer you still, You and I are not yet friends. Saith Bernard, Oh ! I tremble to think of that, that I should fall into the hands of living death, and of dying life, where men do not die, that they might for ever die (saith he) they do die that they may for ever die, they are alwaies dying, but never die, but are kept by the Almighty power of God on purpose that they might be fewel for his wrath, and subjects for his revenging Justice to strike upon. Oh ! consider of this you that are so ready to desire death, because you are in a lingering misery at any time. Is a lingering misery so evil ? Then what will be the lingering evil of eternity ?

Bernard
lib. 5. de
consid. c. 12

A dreadful
considera-
tion.

Use to the
impatient.

Obs. 5

Fifthly observe, *The wonderful misery of wicked men in their affliction*, they have no whither to go for help, they have not God, they have no refuge, but to the mountains and hills, and what's their refuge there but that they may fall upon them ? Oh the difference between a Saint of God and a wicked man in times of affliction ? When in times of affliction thou (if thou beest wicked) shalt rage and be mad and know not whither to go, and the uttermost help that thou canst think to have is from the Hills and Mountains to fall upon thee, but then the Saints of God shall be able to look up to Heaven, and Cry, Heaven is open for us, open to receive my soul, Angels come and guide it, and bear it in, Oh Arms of Mercy, Bowels of Mercy, spread open your selves to imbrace me : here's a difference. And is not this better than to cry to mountains to fall upon thee, and hills to cover thee ? And yet such a difference in mens estates doth sin and godliness make.

Obs. 6.

And then the last is, *Oh the wonderful evil of despair ! what a dreadful thing is desperation ?* It suggests nothing else, the greatest benefit it doth suggest it is to be crush'd in pieces :

pieces : ſo the help that many have, it is a halter to ſtrangle them, a knife to murder them, the water to drown them. Oh deſperation is a dreadful thing. *Francis Spira* feeling the dreadfulneſs of deſperation, Cries out, *Verily deſperation is Hell its ſelf.* Upon all this *Luther* concludes with this exhortation : Oh let us ſtir up our ſelves to the fear of God, let us fly Idolatry, let us beautifie the Word by our holy lives, and pray to Chriſt that we might eſcape ſuch things as theſe are, that God inflict upon the contemnners of his Word. If you would not come into this wonderful deſpairing condition, Oh learn to fall down before the Word, fear God now that you may not deſpair ; you that condemn, and ſlight, and ſcorn the Word now, this may prove to be your portion ere long, that this deſperate cry may be the greateſt eaſe that your forſaken ſouls can have.

Deſpair
chuiſes
cruiſing,
ſtrangling,
ſtabbing,
drowning,
Ec.
Fr. Spira,
Luther
in loc.

VER. 9.

O Iſrael, thou haſt ſinned from the daies of Gibeah.

O IſRAEL, I am ſpeaking this to you, it meerly concerns you, you have ſinned from the daies of *Gibeah*, you think there is no great matter in your ſin why there ſhould be theſe dreadful threatnings, that you ſhould come to this deſperate condition ; Why (ſay the men of *Iſrael*) what means the Prophet to be ſo terrible in his threatnings ? pray what's our ſin ? Yes, you have ſinned, as in the daies of *Gibeah*. From the daies of *Gibeah*, ſo it is in your Books, or it may be read, *Beyond the daies of Gibeah*, or more than in them, as *Ezek. 16. 52.* From the daies of *Gibeah* ; From what time was that ? You may read the ſtory of *Gibeah* if you read the 19. and 20. of *Judges*, and their ſin. I ſhall not need to ſpend much time now in opening what *Gibeah* was, or the ſin of *Gibeah* was, becauſe that in the 9. Chapter of this Propheſie, and the 9. Verſe, there I met with thoſe words ; that, they had corrupted themſelves as in

מִימֵי
הַנִּבְעָה
de, ex, a, ab
are notes of
compariſon
Ezek. 16.

52.

Judges 18,
19, & 20.
Chapters
referred to
the Text.

When the
story of the
Levites
concubine
seems to
have hap-
pened.

Judg. 1.

Expos. 2.
Pre pre-
ferred.

the daies of Gibeah. But it is not only the 19. and 20. Chapters where we have the story of that horrible wickedness of the abusing of the Levites Concubine, but likewise that that we have in the 18. touching their Idolatry that there was among the people, there was *Micahs* Idol, so that the Prophet hath reference to the 18, 19, & 20. Chapters of the Book of *Judges*. Now you have sinned, *as in the daies of Gibeah*: that is, you take it from the daies of Gibeah that is of old: Oh your forefathers of old have committed Idolatry and sin against me, and you are grown rooted in your sin, and have taken it from your forefathers, for it was very antient, that sin of the Levites Concubine: It doth seem to be before the time of the *Judges*, it seems to be committed between the time of *Joshua* and the time of the *Judges*. (For though things be set in Scripture so that one seems to be after another, yet it is not alwaies so in the time.) But my reason why that sin of the Levites Concubine seems to have been then, is this: because you find in that story of the 19. of *Judges*, when the Levite was passing on, his servant would have had him gone into *Jebus*, but his master said unto him, *We will not turn aside hither into the City of a stranger that is not of the Children of Israel, we will pass over to Gibeah*. So that it seems *Jerusalem* was not taken in by the children of *Israel*; but if you reade the 1. of *Judges* you shall find that *Jerusalem* was taken, it was taken before you reade of any particular *Judg*, therefore this sin was very antient that was in the daies of *Gibeah*. You have sinned of old (saith he) and you have continued in the succession of sin of old; that's the first, if you take it, *From the daies of Gibeah*.

But it's rather I think to be taken *Pre* than otherwise, *i. e.* Your sin is more than the daies of *Gibeah*, it's greater, whatever you think of your sin, you think you worship and serve God. Yet the truth is, was that sin horrible that a whole City should come together to force a Levites Concubine till she was dead at the door, was that a horrible sin? Yea, and

and was it horrible for them to ſtand to defend it? Your ſin is greater.

Confirmed

Your ſin is greater; why? for firſt, That was but one particular act, it was all done in one night; but you go on in a conſtant ſetled way.

1.

And then ſecondly, That ſin was a ſin but of ſome few of the people; your ſin is more generally.

2.

Thirdly, That ſin they had not ſo much means againſt it, nor ſo much experience of the waies of God as you, and therefore your ſin is greater, than the ſins that were in the daies of *Gibeah*.

3.

Yea further, Your ſin is greater, becauſe that you continuing in your forefathers ſin you provoke God more, that God ſhould make uſe of your forefathers to revenge ſuch a ſin as that was and yet you continue in the committing of as great ſins as they did commit. That's the meaning: and for further opening of that ſin I ſhall refer you to that that I delivered in the 9. Chapter.

4.

But that their ſin was either from the daies of *Gibeah*, or *More* than the daies of *Gibeah*. From thence the Notes are.

Firſt, *That the ſame ſins continued in from Anceſtors are greater than theirs were.* We are ready to excuſe our ſin and ſay, Why, we do nothing but that our forefathers did. I, but it may be greater than the ſins of thy forefathers, becauſe they had not ſuch means. This would anſwer thoſe that plead for old ſuperſtitious vanities: Why ſhould we be wiſer than our forefathers? But know, that if you continue in their ſins, it's worſe to you than to them.

Obl. 1.

But this is the ſpecial Note from hence, *That God takes it very ill that thoſe men, or the poſterity of thoſe men whom he doth uſe as inſtruments to puniſh ſin in others, and to reform others, yet ſhould be guilty of the ſame ſin themſelves, or greater.* Oh! (ſaith the Prophet) you may juſtly expect to have the Mountains to fall upon you, and the Hills to cover you, for you are more wicked than in the daies of *Gibeah*, though I did uſe

Uſe.

Obl. 2.

your forfathers to punish that great sin, yet you continue to be viler and worse than they were that were punished by your forfathers. Oh my brethren, God cannot endure to see that wickedness continued in men, that they shall be made use of to punish in others: What shall we be used, or any in this generation be used for to execute the anger of God, the displeasure of God upon superstitious people, and shall we continue in the sin of Superstition? shall we be used to cast out mens inventions, and shall we bring in mens inventions? yea, shall we be used to punish Oppression and Tyranny, and Injustice, and shall we continue in Oppression, Tyranny, and Injustice? Oh! this cries to Heaven when it shall be said, Well, God stirred up you to make you an instrument to cast out such Oppressing Courts, such Tyranny, and such and men that were so cruel to godly people, you were used to cast out them, and you come and succeed them in such Oppressions and Tyranny, and Injustice, and you make my Saints cry to Heaven for the burdens that you lay upon them. Oh! this would be very heaue. Take we heed that when God uses us, or our forfathers to reform any evil, take heed that it be never said, that those evils continue in their Children after them.

*Applied to
these times*

There hath been much ado in our REFORMATION, as there was much ado in the punishment of the sin of *Gibeah*; it cost much blood to punish that sin; and so it hath cost much blood to punish Oppressors, to bring in Delinquents, to cast out those that have been burdens to the people of God. Therefore it was worse in their posterity to continue in that sin that had cost so much blood to have it punished. And so the more it costs to cast out our oppressing Courts, &c. the more fearful wil our sin be if we continue in Oppression our selves. You complain sometimes of

Ministers.

Ministers if they reprove sins, and be guilty of the same sins they reprove you of, you account that very evil, and so in-

Magistrats

deed it is. So it may be as wel said of Magistrates, for them to punish sins, and yet continue in them themselves.

There

There they ſtood, the battel in Gibeah againſt the children of iniquity did not overtake them.

There they ſtood] Either this muſt be meant of the men of Gibeah, that they ſtood, and the battel did not overtake the children of iniquity. Expoſ. 1.

Or elſe according to others, it is to be interpreted of the men of *Israel*, there the men of *Israel* ſtood, and their battel did not overtake the children of iniquity.

If it be meant of the men of *Gibeah*, there they ſtood, then it notes their ſtoutneſs, they would ſtand it out, *There they ſtood*. Though they had committed ſuch a horrible wickedneſs, and there was a deſire but to have thoſe that were Delinquents to be brought forth for puniſhment, yet they combine together and would ſtand it out, they ſtood ſtoutly to maintain the wickedneſs that was committed, eſpecially after their firſt ſucceſs, they fought, and in both the daies they ſlew forty thouſand; now having the firſt day, this did hearten them, yea, they had the day the ſecond time, and that made them ſtout in their way: Succeſs will make men ſtand it out in their wickedneſs. God manie times gives ſucceſs on purpoſe to harden the hearts of men that they may ſtand it out unto their ruin, for ſo it proved to the *Benjamites*. God gives ſucceſs ſometimes in judgment.

Be not troubled at the ſucceſs of Adverſaries, God gives them ſucceſs to harden their hearts, to ſtand it out that they may be ruined at laſt. Expoſ. 2.

Or, if you take it for the men of *Israel*, *There they ſtood*.

I find abundance of ſtrange apprehenſions of Interpreters and variety about this, and it would coſt one a great deal of time, the opening of this Verſe, to compoſe but the ſeveral Interpretations that men have upon this Text, but Ple only give you what I think may be the ſcope of the holy Ghoſt, or at leaſt what may be fairly hinted from the words. Variety of Interpreters.

The men of Israel stood.

Expos. 1. That is, (according to some,) when they saw in their battel at *Gibeah* they did not prevail at first, they saw their brethren stood out stoutly, and they lost so many thousand men, upon this they were at a stand; There they stood, they knew not what in the world to do, to think that so good a Cause, and a work that they had warrant from God to do, yet they should have such ill success, there they stood.

Applied to England. Men had need be very well grounded in a good Cause when they meet with much difficulty. I beleve since this Cause that we have been about in *England* hath bin begun, many through unbeleef and cowardize have bin at a stand, they stood and knew not which way to go, Lord, is this the Cause of God? is this the Truth of God? what, to have such ill success. Many are lost in their spirits only by success.

Or thus,

Expos. 2. *There they stood*] that is, Though they were at a stand, and somewhat troubled, yet they persisted in their work, notwithstanding any difficulties they met withall, they would not fly off, but there they stood to it, they were resolved whatever ill success they had, to go on in the work that God had call'd them to.

The battel in Gibeah against the children of iniquity did not overtake them.

When they did fight against the children of iniquity, yet this battel did not overtake them [to wit, the *Benjamites*] not the first day, nor the second day, but they were foil'd twice: Though I know others do give other Interpretations of this word, yet this seems to be more genuine.

But

But why doth the Prophet bring it in here? The men of Israel (to whom *Hosea* did prophesie) might say, You tell us that our sin is as in the daies of *Gibeah*, yea, but may we have the first day, and the second day, we hope we shall do well enough. Nay (saith the Prophet) your sin is worse, you may not think that your case is so good as the *Benjamins*, the Battel did not overtake them, but it shall overtake you: and upon this ground the Prophet brings in this, that the Battel did not overtake them, granting that which they would object, yet so as it should not make for them, but to take away their hopes to escape. And thus you have the meaning. The Observations are:

First, *That the children of iniquity may escape once, and again*: Though men be children of iniquity, yet the Battel may not overtake them. It's as famous a story to take away the seeming success in an ill cause, and disappointment in a good Cause, as any I know in all the Book of God: it did not overtake them at first: Gods wrath follows many men in this world, and yet for a long time overtakes them not, but God calls it back, *Psal. 78. 38. He being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not, yea, many a time turned he his anger away and did not stir up all his wrath.* But at length Gods wrath overtakes men. In *Zach. 1. 6. Did not my words take hold upon your fathers?* I sent out my threatening words and you escaped a long time, but at length my word caught hold of them. As the Dog that follows the Hare barking a great while, but at length he overtakes it and ceases upon it and tears it: So, did not my Word take hold upon your forefathers?

Calvin he gives another Interpretation of these words, and some other Notes upon it, but I think that this is the main and Genuine scope of them.

VER. 10.

It is in my desire that I should chastise them.

I *T is in my desire*] God speaks here as one that hath forborn a long time, and now longs to satisfy himself.

Tremelius upon the place notes, that the form of the word for chastising here, it is unusual, because (saith he) perhaps God would express some more than ordinary way of punishing them. And *Luther* renders it, **Exceeding desirously will I chastise them.* It is in my will to chastise them. Oh! blessed God, do not we find in thy Word that the Works of thy Justice are said to be thy strange Works, and that thou art not willing to grieve the children of men, that mercy pleases thee? but where do we ever find that Justice was so pleasing to thee?

forma, Tremel. * *וְאֶסְכַּח בְּחֵמָה* [In desiderio meo, & castigabo eos] *Valde cupido eos castigabo, So Luther.* See *Buxtorf, Lexic. Heb. in יִסְכַּח*.

It's true, though at first God seems to forbear the execution of Justice as a thing he hath no mind to, yet if sin be continued in, in a stubborn way, now God desires it as a thing that there's nothing more pleasing to him. He is burdened with mens sins, and desires to bring punishments upon them; as a man under a great burden desires to be eased; In *Isa. 1.* *Oh! I will ease me of mine Adversaries.* And in *Ezek. 5. 13.* you shall find there that God in threatening of wrath saith, that he would do thus, and thus, and he would be comforted: and in *Prov. 1.* he laughs at the destruction of wicked men, it's a thing that rejoices him at the very heart. And in the *Revelations* the wrath of God is call'd the wine of his wrath, because he takes so much pleasure in the execution of it.

Real, 1. 1. Gods Justice is God himself as well as any other Attribute. 2. God

2. God he doth delight to vindicate his honor, therefore the word that is for *Chastisement*, it signifies sometimes, the vindication of a mans honor: the honor of God is dear to him: Your peace and comforts may be dear to you; I, but my honor is more dear to me.

3. In Chastisements God fulfils his Word, the Word of God would be slighted & contemn'd else: Now this pleases me therefore to chastise them to fulfil my Word upon them.

Oh! the fearful evil of sin that brings the creature into such a condition, as Gods heart is delighted in every evil that sinful creatures suffer: this must needs be a sad condition indeed, for the merciful God that delights so much in doing of mercy, yet now to look upon a sinner under his wrath, and delights in it, and loves it, and is wel pleased to see the creature, even the work of his own hands to be under his wrath. Hereafter there will be pure Justice, God wil delight in the destruction of sinners in Hell, in the execution of his Justice upon them, he wil there do nothing else but rejoyce in it, there shal be nothing but joy in Gods heart to see the execution of his Justice upon sinners to all eternity, yea, and God will call all the Angels and Saints to come to rejoyce with him, Come ye Angels and Saints and rejoyce with me, here's a wretched sinner that was stubborn & rebellious against me in the time of his life, and see how my Power hath overtaken him, see the dreadful-ness of my wrath, come and rejoyce with me for ever in this wrath of mine. This will be the condition of sinners eternally in Hell.

Consider this, you that have a desire to sin, a mind to sin, to delight in sin, that are comforted in sin? Is it in your will to sin? It is Gods will to punish: Can you rejoyce in sin? God can rejoyce in the execution of his wrath: Are you resolute upon your sin? God can be resolute in the waies of his wrath. When God chastises his Servants for their infirmities, he doth it as a thing he hath no mind at all to, and therefore saith the Apostle, *If need be, we fall*

Use,

Use of ad-
monition
to those in
whose will
it is to sin.

F f f

1 Pet. 1. 6.
into

into many temptations, and it is but seeming grievous: And himself is afflicted in all their afflictions. *David* would have *Joab* go against *Absolon*, but saith he, Use the young man kindly, for my sake. So when God doth chastise his Servants, he sends an affliction, Go (saith he) and scourge such an one, yea, but use him kindly for my sake, for all that.

The bowels of *David* did yern towards *Absolon*, even when he sent *Joab* to fight against him. So the bowels of God do yern towards his People when he sends afflictions upon them. But when he comes to deal with wicked and ungodly men, I will do it to purpose (saith God) I will delight in it, I will be comforted in it, it is my desire, &c.

The People shall be gathered against them.

Expos. 1. That is, I will chastise them after this way, *By gathering of people against them.* The *Assyrians* when they gathered against them, they did it meerly out of their own ends. Yea, but saith God, I have an hand in it, I will gather them against them. And certainly God had a mind to chastise them, when he would gather enemies against them, the *Assyrians* it's like would never have dar'd to presume to come against *Israel* if God had not had an hand in it: And certainly we could never have imagined that it were possible that so many should be gathered together in this Publick Cause in this Land to maintain wickedness, and to fight to make themselves slaves, but only that God had a mind to chastise *England*.

Expos. 2. But I find by others that it's read thus:
of the former part of the Verse. I will chastise them according to my mind, and so the word will bear it.

The Septuagint they read it, *According to my desire.

* *κατὰ τὸν νοῦν μου* *ἐν τῷ θυμῷ μου* *ψαλμ. 70. Iuxta desiderium meum corripiam eos. vulg.*

Oecolampad. in loc. So *Oecolampadius* upon the place, saith, God prescribed a cer-

a certain time to have this people come in and repent, but ſaith God, you ſhal not preſcribe me how long I ſhal ſtay, but I will do it when I pleaſe, both for the time of the chaſtiſment, and for the degree of the chaſtiſment.

God when he hath a mind to bring about a thing, he will gather the people when his mind is come. I remember it is ſaid in the life of Pompey, a proud ſpeech he was wont to have, when they aſkt him what they ſhould do when the enemies came againſt them? Oh (ſaith he) let me but ſtamp upon the ground of Italy and I ſhall have men enough; that was a proud ſpeech of him, but it's a true one in God, let him but ſtamp with his feet and he can gather people enough together.

Obſ.

And then further, *God will chuſe with what rod he will ſurge us*, according to his mind, for the degree, and the kind too. Many afflictions when they are upon us we mourn and repine, and theſe diſcontented expreſſions comes from us, Oh! I could bear any thing but that.

But is it fit for thee to chuſe thine own rod? God might have ſaid alſo, I had rather you had committed ſome other ſin. It may be, becauſe that's the affliction that is moſt croſs to thy ſpirit, therefore God will have it, God ſees that that's more for his honor, and perhaps for thy good, becauſe it is the croſſeſt affliction that God could find out, therefore thou haſt that affliction that God might ſtrike thee in the maſter-vain. Therefore let us learn to ſubmit to the will of God. Is it fit that thou ſhouldeſt chuſe thy ſin and thy rod too? No, ſtay there; If thou wilt chuſe thy ſin, God will have liberty to chuſe thy rod.

*We may
not chuſe
our ſin and
our rod too.*

When they ſhall bind themſelves in their two furrows.

Theſe words have very great obſcurity in the firſt view of them, and I find a mighty deal of puzzling among Interpreters about them. The difficulty is in the word that is

*The Text
very diffi-
cult.*

באסור
לסתי עונתם
In vincire eos in duo-
bus aut succis, aut pe-
catis, aut o. culis, aut
fontibus scribetur per
ו לigitur à majore-
this per ו

Sulcis עונות
iniquitates עונת
oculi עיני
fontes עינת
Vid. Buxtorf. Le-
xicon Heb. in ענה
עו עיו ענה
Arias Montanus
In corripere eos prop-
ter duas iniquitatu.

עין תפסו עיניו
עין תפסו עיניו
עין תפסו עיניו
Vincire אסור
Catigare ורר
But in some Moods
and Tenses they are
hardly differenced.
Propter geminum
peccatum ipsorum,
Luther.

[* Qui erant ut
עונתם oculi eoru
seu amassij. Buxtorf
in בעיו
Jer. 2. 13. Hier. in
loc. See Diod. in loc.
Expof. 2.

here translated *Furrows*, the same letters of the word, take away the points of the Hebrew, and they may be for these two *sins*, or their two *eyes*, there's a little difference in the *Van* and the *Jod* which are much like one another. And in all these three waies according to to the signification of the word, Either *Furrows*, *Sins*, or *Eyes*, the sense may go reasonable well. As thus:

First, For *Sins*. And they shall *bind themselves*. You may turn it as well of Gods Threatning what he would do; for it is, *bind them*, or, *in binding them*, so it is translated by others, in binding them for their two sins: I will bind them for their two sins, so I find *Arias Montanus* hath it, *Bind them for their two sins*.

And I find the Septuagint translate it so too, *Chastise them for their two sins*, for so it may be, *Chastise* as well as *Bind*, for the words are very near together that signifies either *binding*, or *chastising*.

I will *chastise* them for their two sins: When he binds them he will chastise them. And so I find that *Luther* hath it, for he doubles these.

And then they think that it hath reference to the two *Calves of *Dan* and *Bethel*: Or the two *Sins*, of *Bodily* and *Spiritual Adultery*: Or otherwise it hath the same sense with that in *Jer. 2. 13. My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me the fountain of Living Waters, and hewed them out Cisterns, broken Cisterns that can hold no water.*

Or if you wil have it in the second place, according as it is in your books, *They shall bind themselves in their two furrows*, then the meaning of it is this, That I wil bring their *Enemies* upon them, and they shall yoke them like *Oxen* that are yok'd to plow, they shall bring them into servitude, and into bondage, they shall make them plow in their

two furrows, (double work.) So *Polanus*, becauſe they ſhall put double work upon them and make them work in a ſervile way. And the rather do I think this is the meaning of it, becauſe the holy Ghofth doth follow the metaphor of it, *An Heifer*, as it follows;

*Polanus
in loc.*

And Ephraim is as an Heifer that is taught and loveth to tread out the Corn.

And ſo take it in the third way, the word that ſignifies *an eye*, only altering the letter *Vau* for *Jod*, and then this is the ſenſe; they ſhall yoke them as the Oxen are yoked eye to eye. They yoke the Oxen even and ſet eye to eye; ſo the enemies ſhall come and yoke them ſo that they ſhall be like beaſts to do their work, and this ſhall be the condition of *Ephraim* that hath this fair neck. I find others that take this;

Expoſ. 3.

They ſhall bind themſelves in their two furrows.

That is, They ſhall Covenant together. When the enemy comes upon them then they ſhall Covenant together and joyn together, as Oxen that are yok'd together, and *Judah* and *Israel* ſhall joyn together, and they ſhall be in their furrows, in their trenches, as in reference to us: that when the people are gathered together, *England* and *Scotland* ſhall bind themſelves together, and lie together in their ſeveral Trenches. So I find others take it.

*Expoſ. 4.
(Calvin)*

*As Engl.
and Scotl.
in the late
war.*

But rather from the chief and genuine ſcope, I ſuppoſe the meaning is this, That they ſhall be brought into miſerable bondage, they ſhall be like Oxen: and ſo ſaith one Interpreter upon the place, When you ſee Oxen yok'd together then be put in mind of the yoke of the enemies; you live daintily and bravely now, but when God ſhall let out the enemies upon you, you ſhall ſerve as ſlaves, yea, as beaſts.

VER. II.

And Ephraim is as an Heifer that is taught and loveth to tread out the Corn: but I passed over upon her fair neck: I will make Ephraim to ride: Judah shall plow, Jacob shall break his clods.

IN the 2. verse you heard much of the divisions of Ephraim, and of the ten Tribe; but in the latter end of the 10. verse you heard how God would joyn them together: But how should they be joyned? it should be in their bondage, they should be bound together in their furrows: now though it be in your books, *They shall bind themselves*, which hath likewise a sense which we spake to then, yet you may as well reade the words, *They shall bind them together*, and so carry the sense, That they should be bound in their furrows, like Oxen in the Plough, there they should be yok'd; they would not come in together under Gods yoke, but they shall come intogether under the yoke of the Adversaries: and that I think is the principal scope of the words, *They shall bind them in their two furrows.*

They that were so divided in their prosperity, when they come into bondage there they shall by their enemies be bound together. It was said of Ridly and Hooper, they could not agree together till they were in Prison, and then they could agree together. And so when we were heretofore in our bondage we could agree better together than now, Oh! it were just with God to bring us again under the bondage of our enemies, and bind us in our furrows together.

But Ephraim thought her self far from this. No, Ephraim is not for plowing work, Ephraim loves to tread out the Corn, but not to plow. They were wont in those times instead of threshing out the seed from the chaff, to have beasts to tread out the seed, or to draw instruments whereby the seed was separated from the husk. Now it was the Command of God, that while he was treading out the
Corn

Obs.

Hooper
& RidleyApplied to
professors
now.

Expof.

Corn that they ſhould not muzzle the mouth of the Ox. Deut. 25.

First, There was no yoke upon them while they were treading out the Corn.

And ſecondly, then they were not to be muzzle'd but to feed all the while as they pleaſed, while they were treading out the Corn; this by the Command of God. Now this was a very eaſie work for them to be without yoke, to run up and down in the Corn and ſo they could feed themſelves fat; They had enough to feed on, certain food, and preſent food, whereas thoſe Heifers that went to plow were fain to be abroad in the ſtorms and cold and wind, and work all day long, and it may be not have a bit of meat till night, and this was a hard work, and Ephraim did not love that work; and it ſeems to have reference to ſome of the ten Tribes who would ſtay in their Country, and worſhip at Dan and Bethel, and would not go to Jeruſalem, Oh! that was hard, and it was better for them to ſtay in the Land where they might enjoy their poſſeſſions, their ſhops, their tradings, their friends, that was eaſie, but for them to go to Jeruſalem that might coſt them their eſtates, it would raiſe an oppoſition againſt them, and they muſt leave all and go for the Worſhip of God, to worſhip him according to his own way; this was a plowing-work in reſpect of the other. Now Ephraim, thoſe that live among the ten Tribes, they loved no ſuch hard work as that was. From whence there are many excellent points obſervable. As,

Applied to
the ten
Tribes.

The firſt, *It's a ſign of a carnal heart for to be ſet upon eaſie work in Gods ſervice, and to avoid any work that God calls to, be- Obſ. 1.
cause it is difficult. [Ephraim loves to tread out the Corn.]* It's a dangerous thing to deſire more eaſie in Gods Work than God would have us.

Secondly, *Thoſe ſervices that bring preſent contentment, and preſent comfort, that there is preſent encouragement goes along with, Obſ. 2.
even ſuch as are carnal and Hypocrites can be content withal; for when they tread out the Corn, there was preſent ſupply. So it is with men, when they can have preſent ſupply in main-
tenance.*

*Vbi non vi-
dent que-
stū, vident
Christum,
ubi datur
ut edant,
adduci
possunt ut
credant,
Ternov.
in loc.*

tenance. I remember it's a speech of a learned man, even upon this very Scripture, saith he, Where men see not present gain coming in, they despise Christ there. It's a speech of *Ternovius*, Where they may have to eat for the present, there they may be easily brought to beleieve such a way of service and worship that is countenanced, by the State for the present, *Numb. 7. 9. 2 Sam. 6.* God allowed no Cart to the children of *Kobath* to carry the Ark, and that was their sin in putting it upon one, *1 Sam. 6.* And where men may enjoy certain comings in whether they work or no, or whether they work negligently or no, there's a great temptation lies in this; there's not such a temptation lies in a mans enjoying encouragement if it be upon uncertainties, and that he shall have it no longer than he doth labor, and labor to purpose; but when men shall have their estates coming in in a certain way though they labor by themselves, or other, or though negligently, or industriously, here's a great temptation in this.

Obs. 3.

And then further; *For it is a sign of a carnal heart, only to mind things presently, to labor for an accommodation to themselves for the present.* A generous spirit will labor for the posterity that is to come; If none should plow, how would there be Corn to tread out? We must be willing to plow though we have not present food, though we should have nothing till night, yea, though we should have nothing till the night of death, yea, in all our lives we should be willing to plow in hope. *Ephraim* loved not that work. That's a generous spirit that is willing to endure difficulty here though he finds no present comings in, though it be for afterwards.

*All our life
we should
plow in
hope.*

*In Duties
we should
persevere
though there
be no pre-
sent comfort*

And it may be applied it to soul-work, in our seeking to God: Many men and women they are content to pray, and follow God and his Ordinances so long as they may have present comfort, but if that fails they have no heart to the duty. Now we should be willing to plow, that is, to endure difficulty though we have nothing coming in.

This

This is that which cauſed ſo many to periſh in the world, they muſt have that which is preſent content; whereas the Saints of God are willing to truſt God though they have nothing in this world, to truſt him to have their wages in the world to come. It's a Scripture of very excellent uſe unto us. It follows.

*This 11th
Verſe of
ſpecial uſe.*

But I paſſed over upon her fair neck: I will make Ephraim to ride.

But I paſſed over upon her fair neck:

By her eaſie work in treading out the Corn, and not having the yoke upon her neck to plow, ſhe became to be very delicate, her ſkin was white and tender, *Her fair neck*: The Goodneſſ of her Neck, ſo it is in the Hebrew, or her goodly white Skin, delicate and tender ſhe was. The meaning of it is, by her *fair Neck*, is the beauty of her proſperity; and ſo the delicacy of her Neck, through her proſperity, nothing muſt trouble her, let works that are troubleſom and hard let others come to them if they will, But for her part ſhe was tender and delicate and muſt endure no burdens at all, nor no difficulty at all.

טוב
צוֹמֶרֶת
Expoſ.

First, *Her fair Neck*.

Many are proud of their fair Necks and Skins, ſo proud as they grow extream wanton by reaſon of it, they muſt lay open therefore their fair necks that others may ſee them, ſee how white they are, what fair Skins they have, and put black Patches likewise to ſet out their beauty and the whiteness of their fair Skins, and if that will not ſerve, even laying over a paint to make it fair if it be not otherwiſe ſo; nothing but Eaſe, and Delicacy, and pleaſure is for them, as if they came into the world for no other end but to live bravely and be look'd upon, as if man-kind and all creatures muſt work and ſuffer to provide for theſe nice and delicate wantons, who yet are of no uſe at all in the world, certainly, God never gave any great eſtates in the

Obſ.
The evil of
Bare necks
and breasts
Black
Patches,

*And painted
faces.*

Great Estates ill
used.

Every one
bound to
labor.
Fair Skins
foul Souls
oftimes.

Alice Drivers Neck-
kercher.
Act. and
Monum.

Hard breeding fittest
for Christian suffering.

world for no other use but only to be brave withal, and keep their Skin white. Whatsoever estates men and women have, yet except they endeavor to be useful in the world in a proportionable way unto those estates that they have they can have little true comfort of what they do enjoy, the comfort of the lives of rational creatures certainly it's not in a fair Skin, in a white Skin, their comfort is in being useful in the places where God hath set them, their good consists in that. *Man is born to labor*, and there must be labor one way or other, every one is bound to labor; these fair white Skins, and fair Necks, Oh! what foul souls many of them have, their beauty is but Skin-deep. Oh! filthy and abominable in the eyes of God, and in the eyes of those that know the corruptions of their hearts. How would these fair necks be able to bear Iron chains for Christ? to be naid to the stake, to have such a Neckkercher put upon them as *Alice Driver* had? You have it in the story of the *Book of Martyrs*, when they put the chain about her neck to nail her to the stake, she gloried in it, and blest God for it: I but this *Alice Driver* was wont to plow, (for so she saith a little before in the story) her father did bring her up to plow, she was not brought up so delicately as others were, and she could endure an iron chain upon her neck for Christ. It follows:

But I passed over upon her fair Neck.

Expos. 1.

Some carry the words as expressing Gods indulgence, as if he was content to let *Ephraim* to prosper and thrive in their way, and not to bring any hard bondage upon them, but it's more like the other way that I find others to

* Quando à go. i. e.

Deo dicitur semper
plagas &
adversa
significat.

I came upon her fair neck, and made the yoke to pass over.

So *Hierom* upon the place, saith when it's spoken of God (this Phrase, to pass over) *It's not only meant here in a way

way of threatning, but it's alwaies ſo meant in Scripture, in a way of threatning of Gods *paſſing over*, and it may עברתי very well be here a threatning expreſſion following the ſimilitude, for God is in a way of Allegory expreſſing himſelf after the manner of Husbandry, as when he threatens that they ſhall be yok'd.

And then Ephraim is compared to a Heifer that is taught, as if he ſhould ſay, he would not willingly work. From whence the Note is,

That, *God looks upon dainty, tender, delicate people that mind nothing but their eaſe and delicacie with INDIGNATION.* What! Ephraim muſt be ſo tender and delicate that nothing muſt come upon *her neck*! P'le make the yoke to come upon it (ſaith God.) When people through their delicacy they muſt live in the world and altogether be tended, and all things muſt be ſerviceable to them, and they of no uſe at all, God cannot bear it. And as for the eminency of any of you, either in eſtates, or honors in the world above others, it ought not to be the cauſe of envy, for it is God that puts the difference between one and the other; we do not envy that ſome ſhould go finer than others, but this is that which neither God nor man can endure, That men and women ſhould have ſo much in the world, and yet be ſo little uſeful to the world, ſhould be through their delicacy as if they were born for nothing elſe but like *Babies* to play withal. Saith God, *P'le make the yoke to paſſ over them.* But now, there are other manner of works, than ſervile works, though you do not put your hands to ſervile labor; But then you through your delicacy, if you meet with any hard work, will do nothing, for God, the Lord looks upon ſuch diſpoſitions as *ſinful*, and with *Indignation*, and God hath his time to bring them to hardneſs, as he hath done to many. How many delicate and fair necks that could not endure any difficulty hath God brought the yoke upon in theſe daies, that were ſo nice and tender, and complaining of every little difficulty in any

Obſ.

A caution

Examples
in our time
of the truth
of the text.

work that God would have them to do? God hath made the yoke to pass over their heads, and to lie heavie upon their necks; God threatens this to the Daughters of Babylon, to the Antichristian party especially, in Isa. 47. 1, 2. Come down, and sit in the dust, O Virgin, Daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: there is no Throne, O Daughter of the Caldeans; for thou shalt no more be call'd, Tender, and Delicate. Take the Mill-stones and grind meal; uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers. And then in the 3. vers. Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea thy shame shall be seen: I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man. That which you cannot endure so much as to hear of now, (your very ears are so delicate, as well as your necks) that Ple bring upon you. Oh my Brethren! how much better is it to be willing to endure hardships for God, than to be brought to hardships by our Adversaries? And rather to put our necks under the yoke of Jesus Christ, than to have God put our necks under the yoke of his wrath and displeasure. But God hath his time to bring upon them hard things, and therefore though God spares you for your bodies, that you need not put your bodies to that servileness that others do; yet be so much the more willing to do service for God otherwise, venture your selves among your kindred, that's the work that God calls Ladies to do: You meet with carnal friends that are honorable and of great rank in the world, now for one to appear in the midst of them for the Cause of God, this is as hard a work as to labor with ones hands, and they may do a great deal more service by such work as this, to speak for those that are Godly. When you come in company that is carnal, be willing to put forth your selves to endure hardships in that way that God calls thee to, and God accepts of it; but if thou through the delicacy and niceness of thy spirit, thy spirit comes to be as delicate as thy skin is, and thou must not displease any, nor suffer any thing for God, it's just with God to bring thee to suffer in spite of

Isa. 47. 1. 2

Vers. 3.

Tender
ears.Christ's yoke
easier than
the yoke of
the EnemyLadies-
work.Tender
spirits.

of thy heart. But it follows;

I'll make Ephraim to ride.

Still take this in a way of threatning; in Scripture it's applied both to a way of Mercy and Judgment, in *Iſa: 58. 14.* *Then ſhalt thou delight thy ſelf in the Lord, and I will cauſe thee to ride upon the high places of the Earth.* And I find it in a way of Judgment, in *Job, 30. 21, 22.* *With thy ſtrong hand thou oppoſeſt thy ſelf againſt me, thou liſteſt me up to the wind, thou cauſeſt me to Ride upon it, and diſſolveſt my ſubſtance.* And ſo there might be ſhown other Scriptures where this expreſſion is in a way of Judgment, and ſo it's thought by Interpreters that it hath reference to the ſpeedy captivity of the ten Tribes that they ſhall be carried out of their own Country. As if God ſhould ſay, by his eaſe, and by his much feeding, in treading out the Corn he is grown ſo fat and luſty that there's no ruling of him; yea, but ſaith God, *I will ride him*: though he kicks and ſpurns and is ſo unruly with his fat feeding, yet I'll put ſuch a Curb into his mouth, as I'll order him and rule him according as I pleaſe. He is ſo fierce; for ſo I find that the word in the Hebrew that is for fierceneſs, tumultuouſneſs, and inſolency, it is by divers taken for the word that ſignifies, *to be at Peace*, becauſe that *Peace*, and *Eaſe*, and *Reſt* makes the hearts of men and women inſolent. It was ſo with Ephraim, juſt like a pamper'd horſe that is kept at full feeding, none can ride him; *I but, I'll cauſe him to ride*, ſaith God.

God hath waies to curb men and women that through their proſperity are delicate and unruly, though they may champ upon the bit, and foam at the mouth, and ſtamp again, yet God will rule them. *I'll cauſe Ephraim to ride.*

Iſa. 58. 14.

Job, 30. 21, 22.

Expoſ,

Vide Page nin, Theſaur. Maſaur. in

בּוֹשׁ
שָׁלַל
שָׁלַח &c

Obſ.

And

And Judah shall plow.

Expos.

That is, *Judah* shall take pains and go through many difficulties in the waies of my Worship, and shall suffer much while *Ephraim* lives delicately for a long time, yet *Judah* suffered more difficulty, *Judah* suffered much more difficulty and hardship than the ten Tribes did. And I think that this Scripture hath reference to those two Scriptures that we find, the first is in 2 *King*. 18. from ver. 3. to ver. 9. and the other Scripture is in 2 *Chron*. 28. 6. *Judah* shall plow and be kept in a great deal of hardship in that time when *Ephraim* was so trolick as he was. In 2 *King*. 18. you shall find the great Reformation that *Hezekiah* made in the Worship of God in *Judah*, and *Jerusalem*: And then for his suffering that you have in 2 *Chron*. 28. 6. and 2 *King*. 14. 13. In 2 *Chron*. 28. 6. it is said, *That Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judah an hundred and twenty thousand in one day, which were all valiant men.* It's a very strange Scripture; *Israel*, the ten Tribes they were worse than *Judah*: *Israel* forsook the true Worship of God; *Judah* kept themselves to the true Worship; and yet God let *Israel* so prosper that they did prevail against *Judah* and the Tribe of *Benjamin*, so as to slay in one day an hundred and twenty thousand valiant men. Oh! what crying and shreeking was there in the Country then, that of two Tribes an hundred and twenty thousand valiant men should be slain in one day. We think it's a dreadful battel to have three thousand slain in the Field, but here's a battel of an hundred and twenty thousand slain in one day, and that of two Tribes. And in 2 *King*. 14. 13. *Hoshea King of Israel took Amaziah King of Judah, the son of Jehoash, son the of Ahaziah at Bethshemesh, and came to Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem &c.* Here they were put to a great deal of trouble even by *Ephraim*; *Judah* and *Benjamin* those two Tribes that kept to the Worship of God were to put a great deal

2 *King*.
18. 3--9.
with 2 *Ch*.
28. 6.

2 *Chr*. 28.
6. a strang
Scripture.

deal of afflictions by *Ephraim* (the ten Tribes) that did forſake the Worſhip of God; in the forenamed place, 2 *King.* 18. there you may ſee how theſe reformed, and yet they ſuffered much difficulty. Strange is the Counſels of God concerning men.

For the firſt, *That Judah is ſaid to plow.* That is, They ſhall endure a great deal of trouble in the reforming what is amiſs among them. From whence our Note is this:

That it is an honor for men to labor and go through difficulties for God while others are laboring for taking their eaſe: Be not troubled that you ſee other people can take liberty to themſelves to provide for their eſtates and comings in, and to live bravely, Doth God give you an heart in the mean time to be willing to go through hard work for God? Envie not at them, thou art in the better condition, thou art plowing for God; while they are providing for their own eaſe, thou art doing God ſervice, and they are only providing for themſelves, Oh! thou art far the happier man, the happier woman.

And then in the ſecond place, Take the plowing for the hard things they ſuffered for God, as wel as the hard things they did for God. Then the Note of Obſervation is this:

Let no men boaſt they live more at eaſe than others. Others ſuffer more hardſhip than thou; do not think that God loves thee more than others: God loved *Judah* at this time more than *Ephraim*, and yet *Ephraim* lived bravely, and prevailed over *Judah*, and *Judah* was brought under in ſuch a manner as this; *Judah* was Gods true Church, and *Israel* did apoſtatize from God, and yet one had more outward proſperity than the other. Thus many times thoſe upon whom Gods heart is more ſet, they ſuffer hard afflictions: And thoſe that Gods heart is not ſo much upon, they enjoy their proſperity.

Oh! I beſeech you conſider of this point; for at this day, how many of our Brethren in the Weſtern parts, Oh! the Plowers have plowed deep furrows upon their backs, while

Expoſ. 1.

Obl. 1.

Uſe for
workers.

Expoſ. 2.

Obl. 2.

Uſ. for the
afflicted.The ſuffer-
ings in
the Weſt.

while we have been here (as it were) treading out the Corn ; let not us think that God loves us more than them, they may be more dear to God than we ; *Judah* was far more dear to God than *Israel*, and yet *Israel* must live jocundly and bravely.

A Consideration for men of quality.

Oh ! consider of this you that are of greater rank, all your life is treading out the Corn, you see your poor neighbors endure much hardship, Oh think not that you are higher in Gods thoughts than they, they may be more dear to God than you, and yet they may be put to difficulties, and you may live bravely all your lives.

Object. 4. against the Observation Answered.

But that that may seem to weaken this Note, is only this: viz. *They shall plow*. But the Hebrews do ordinarily make use of the Tenses, the Future and the Preter promiscuously ; but if you put it to the Future, that they *shall plow hereafter*, they interpret it to signify the Captivity of *Judah*, that they shall be carried into Captivity, and so be brought under by the *Babylonians*. Yea, but,

Jacob shall break his clods.

By *Jacob*, we must understand the ten Tribes. As if God should say here, That *Judah* shall be put to some difficulties, yet *Jacob*, the ten Tribes must be put to more ; *Judah* shall be carried into Captivity ; yea, but *Jacob* shall break the clods. Though *Judah* shall plow, yet the breaking the clods is worse than the plowing, for that's more servil, for the Work Master he is the chief, he goes on in plowing, but it is his Servant or Boy he may set to breake the clods after him. So, though *Judah* shall be brought to difficulties, yet *Jacob* shall be put to more difficulties ; for the Captivity of *Judah* was great, yet it was not so great as *Jacob*s.

Or others thus :

Judah shall plow, and Jacob shall break her clods.

That is, [*Judahs clods*] The expression we have here, with

Expos. 1. ενιοχουσι αυτω ια- νος. Occabit ei Jacob. 70.

Expos. 2.

with the reference it hath to *Judah*, ſeems to carry this with it, That there ſhall be a time, though now you that are the ten Tribes, you are ſo delicate and proud above *Judah*, *Judah* is lower than you, and you deſpiſe them, yet time ſhall come that you ſhall be glad to joyn with *Judah*, and be as a ſervant to *Judah*, to break her clods, when God ſhall reſtore his people again; *Judah* ſhall return from his captivity and ſhall be taking pains in the Service of God; and it ſhall be well for you if you can but come and be as their ſervant.

Thoſe that do forſake the true Worſhip of God, though God may have mercy upon them afterwards to joyn them with his people, yet it is well if they may come to be in the meanest condition among Gods People, they ſhould be willing to ſubmit unto it; thoſe that have diſhonored God and ſham'd themſelves in times of tryal, to forſake the Truths of God, it's mercy that ever God will bring them to joyn with his Church again; But if he doth bring them to joyn with his Church they ſhould think it a great mercy and be willing to be in the meanest condition, what muſt thoſe men think to be Maſters & Lords that have forſaken God and his Truth and have been very falſe for their own ends, to ſave themſelves and ſtates in time of tryal, ſhall they think in times of Reformation to bear all before them? Oh! it's mercy if they may be but admitted to break the clods, to joyn with thoſe Servants of God that have been faithful and willing to ſerve him through difficulties. It follows.

Obſ.

VER. 12.

Sow to your ſelves in Righteouſneſſ, reap in Mercy.

THE holy Ghoſt ſtill goes on in this Allegory of Huſbandry, continuing the metaphor that he had in the Threatning, when he comes to exhortation. In the miſt of his threats he falls to exhorting.

Though the ſins of a people be great, and Judgments neer, yet

Obſ.

who knows what an exhortation may do? who knows what an exhortation may do to the worst people in the world? Oh! there were many things spoken concerning Israel that one would have thought it should have discouraged the Prophet to meddle with Exhortation. But God would have him yet exhort, one cannot tell what an Exhortation may do, in the most desperate hardness of mens hearts, and pride and stoutness of mens spirits, therefore the Prophet exhorts them, as if he should say, Well, if you would not plow, if you would not come under the yoke and be put into the furrows as you were threatned before, why then, sow to your selves, Oh! be willing to break up the fallow ground of your hearts, and sow to your selves in Righteousness, and so you shall reap in Mercy.

Sow in Righteousness, and reap in Mercy.

I find some of the Antients they interpret this somewhat wildly.

The Exposition of Hierom too much on the left hand, *Seminent in iustitia i. e. in lege: metant in misericordia; id est, in gratia Evangelij.* Luther too much on the right.

Sow in Righteousness: that is, (saith Hierom upon the place) *Sow in the Law, in obedience to the Law, and reap in the Grace of the Gospel;* that's his Interpretation; you shall sow in the works of the Law, and reap in the Gospel. This is far fetcht.

I find Luther upon the place, as Hierom goes somewhat too legal, (so Luther) because his heart was much in the Gospel; and he brings all Scriptures to the uttermost he can for expressing the Grace of the Gospel, he goes somewhat at the furthest the other way:

Sow in Righteousness: what's the seeds of Righteousness? that is, saith he, *The Doctrine of the Gospel tendering the Righteousness of Jesus Christ:* the attending unto this Doctrine of the Gospel, and imbracing this, that there is Righteousness in Jesus Christ alone, this is sowing in Righteousness: for (saith he) what other Righteousness is there but this? When Reason would come to the highest degree of Righteousness.

teouſneſs, what is it that it doth, only this, to conclude Righteouſneſs to be, *to depart from evil, and do things that are good, but what Righteouſneſs is this?* But the Scripture Righteouſneſs is this: for a man to know that he hath no good at all in himſelf, that all his evil is pardoned in Jeſus Chriſt, this is the Righteouſneſs of the Goſpel, and this is the ſeed, the ſeed of all good works: I name this, though I can hardly think that this is the ſcope of the Prophet at this time, yet there is a very good meditation from this which I ſee that uſeful man in the Church of God [Luther] goes on in, ſaith he, *What madneſs and blindneſs in the Adverſary is there, that will urge people to ſow, and yet they do reject and caſt off this ſeed that they ſhould ſow?* That is the Doctrine of the imputation of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt by faith, why ſaith he, in all Pulpits there's crying out to men for good works, that they would ſow in Righteouſneſs, but (ſaith he) where have they their ſeed? The thing certainly is an excellent truth that he hath upon the place: how vain is it for men to be taught to ſow good works till they have got the ſeed? And the ſeed of all good works is, *The Righteouſneſs that we have by Jeſus Chriſt*; and therefore he falls a rebuking thoſe that ſhall blame the Doctrine of the Goſpel as the means of licentiouſneſs, ſaith he, there's a great many when we preach of the Righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, think that we preach licentiouſneſs, and that men may live as they liſt, it's quite contrary, when we preach the Righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, we preach the ſeed of all good works, and thoſe that have this ſeed, good works will come out of them. But ſaith he further, They would have Righteouſneſs, but what? they ſlight the Righteouſneſs of God; making, the Righteouſneſs of his Son, but they muſt have Righteouſneſs of their own to tender up to God. & then when they come to good works they wil ſlight Gods good works, and they will be giving to God of *their* good works, the world doth neglect thoſe as light things, that is, the works of mercy, to receive the Saints &c. No, but

they will have other brave works, to build Churches, and Temples, and Monastries, and to lavish out gold about them, and they are the chief good works: they will not come to do the work as it were of a Servant, but rather the work of a Benefactor to God, for in relieving thy poor brother when none but thy self and God knows it thou doest the work of a servant then, but to build brave Temples, and Monastries, and lavish out Gold upon them, this is for you to be a Benefactor to God. But thus much for his speech.

Sow in Righteousness.

The genuine meaning.

The Text paraphrased.

We know that the Prophet, though he would lead the People to Christ, yet his preaching was most in a Legal way, *Sow Righteousness*: that is, Go on in the works of Righteousness, those works that are right, and just, and equal, such as you may give a good account of them before God and man; as if he should say, Do not you think to put me off merely with outward services, with offering sacrifices, and with this kind of pompous worship, in this superstitious way, I will never accept of these things; but let me have *Righteousness*, let there be the *works of Righteousness*, according to the *Rules of Righteousness*, so work. And the *Jews* if they did but perform the the external works of Righteousness, they might have external Mercies, if so be there were a proportion between one work and another. If indeed they did some works of Righteousness, and not the other, then they could not expect mercy from God; but though there were no saving Grace in them, yet if they did but perform external works of Righteousness, and there was a proportion between one and another; there doth seem to be an external Covenant that they were under for outward Mercies that they should have for their outward Righteousness; Not but that I think for Heaven there they must have true Grace and Godliness, as the Saints must have

now

now; but external Mercies were more annexed to external Duties than now among us.

You will ſay, *We have external Promiſes too.*

Queſt.

Yea, but that's made to Godlineſs in Chriſt Jeſus.

Anſw.

Now from the words we may note,

Fiſt, *That the Actions of men they are Seeds*; ſuch ſeeds as wil certainly come up: other ſeeds may die in the ground & rot and never come up; but there is never an Action that thou perſormeſt, but it will come up one way or other, it will come up to ſomething. Obſ. 1.

And ſecondly, *It will come up in the ſame kind*; the ſeeds of Tares will not come up to Wheat; but it will be a Tare; and ſo the Wheat a Wheat: all our actions will come up in the ſame kind. Men neglect their actions, and think that when they have done, it's over, they forget what they did yeſterday or the day before; but though you may forget it, yet it will come up in the ſame kind, though you think not of it: I remember *Pliny* reports of ſome parts in *Affrica*, that when they ſow their ſeeds, they go away and never look after it for many months together: So it is in many men they ſow but they never mind what they have done, and quite forget what they have done till they muſt come to reap. But certainly thy actions there they lie and will grow up to ſomething. Obſ. 2.

Thirdly, *The ſeed lies in the ground rotting a while, but afterwards comes up*: ſo it is in our actions, they ſeem as if they were quite forgotten, but they will come up, yea, and good actions they ſeem as if they were wholly loſt many times; well, though the ſeed doth rot, rot in the ground for a time, yet it will come up afterwards. Obſ. 3.

Fourthly, *The ſeed when it is ſown it comes up through the bleſſing of God upon it*; it's no endeavor of the Husbandman can make the ſeed come up, but he muſt leave it to the bleſſing of God. So the ſeeds of our Actions muſt be left to God, Gods Juſtice will make the ſeeds of the wicked come up, and his goodneſs and mercy will make the ſeeds of Obſ. 4.

of the Saints to come up; leave thy actions to the blessing of God.

Obs. 5. *Fifthly, The better the seed, is for the most part the longer it lies under ground.* When you sow Wheat and Rye you sow it

**Preached at this *time of the year, but when you sow Barly and Oats you sow them in the Spring-time, but that endures not frost and snow as the Wheat doth. And so the best of our actions lies longest under ground.*

Obs. 6. *The Ministers of God they are Sowers of the Seed of the Word; and the Hearers they should be Sowers too.* The Minister sows the Word in thy ears, and then thou shouldest take it from thence and sow it in thy heart, thy life and conversation.

Obs. 7. *If our actions be seeds that we sow, then large opportunities of doing much service for God should be our riches: like a large field, that is sown with good grain, if thou hast a heart to improve those opportunities.*

Use. Oh! that we would but consider of this, That when the Lord gives to men and women a large opportunity for service, God lets them out so much Land, Go (saith God) you must husband so much Land, and sow it for mine advantage: Many of you that are poor people you have not a foot of Land in the world, and you think that those that are Landed-men they are happy men; Doth God give you opportunity of service to honor him? Oh! thou hast got a great deal of Land, the meanest of you that have opportunities of Service, God lets you out his Land, you have abundance of Land and Ground that God gives to you, and a man should account himself rich according to the opportunity of his Service: As men in the Country account themselves rich according to the Land that they have to

Levit. 27. 16. *plow and sow, in Levit. 27. 16. If a man shall sanctifie unto the Lord some part of a field of his possession, then thy estimation shall be according to the seed thereof.* The meaning is, That if a man will sanctifie a piece of Land to God, well, what is this Land worth? Why (saith the holy Ghost) you shall prize

prize it according to the ſeed thereof, if it be a great piece of Land, yet if it be not fit to bear ſo much ſeed you muſt account it worth but little, but if it be a leſs piece of Land yet if it be fit to receive ſo much ſeed, then it's worth ſo much, thou ſhalt prize it according to the ſeed thereof: ſo the opportunities that are fit to receive much ſeed, Oh! thoſe opportunities ſhould be rich opportunities; and we ſhould account the price of our lives to be according to the ſeed thereof: Thou liveſt ſuch a year, what's thy life worth? it's according to the ſeed thereof. And ſo for theſe four or five laſt years, Oh! what opportunities have we had for ſervice for God? Now they are to be prized according to the ſeed thereof, that is, as we might do ſervice and work in theſe years. Then certainly if we muſt make the eſtimation of our lives according to the advantage of ſervice that we might do for God, then theſe laſt five years we may reckon for fifty. It's a great bleſſing to have a good ſeed-time; the Lord hath bleſt us with this good ſeed-time. Oh now, what a folly were it for a man out of baſe penuriousneſs to ſave his ſeed, that he will not ſow his ground, becauſe he is loth to venture it, or through love of his eaſe he is loth to go abroad, it's ſomewhat cold, and he will keep by the fire ſide, and wil not go abroad to ſow his ſeed. Oh! thus it is with us, we through our baſe unbelief, we will venture nothing for God, we are loth to put our ſelves upon any difficultie, Oh this is our folly.

Well, but what ſeed? It is not every ſeed will ſerve the turn. Be ſowers, *but ſow in Righteouſneſs*, let it be *Righteouſneſs*, let it be precious ſeed, In *Pſalm*, 126. 6. *They ſhall bear precious ſeed with them*: Oh! there's many that ſow venomous ſeed, that will bring forth poyſonful fruit, all their daies they have been ſowing nothing but ſeed of unrighteouſneſs, yea, this field that God hath given to us, of opportunity of ſervice for him, What have many done? what have they ſown? they have ſown ſalt in it: that is, They have ſown their Paſſions, they have ſown Contention, and they

Applied.

Obſ. 8.

Pſ. 126. 6

they have sown the seeds of Discord, for that hath been the cause that our field that we have had, those opportunities that we have enjoyed for God hath bin so barren, there hath been so much salt, the salt spirits of men and women have been so manifested in their Passion and Frowardness, and their Contentions one against another, that it hath made us barren: In Prov. 6. 14. *Frowardness is in his heart; he deviseth mischief continually, he soweth discord.* And vers. 19. *it is made one of the things that the Soul of God doth hate, That a man should sow Discord.* And so in Prov. 16. 28. *Froward men sow strife.* Oh! how many are there amongst us that go from one place to another, and tell you such a tale, and such a report, and sow nothing but strife and discord? Oh! it's that that the Lord hates. What! in such a time as this is to sow Discord! there could never have been a time wherein the sowing of Discord could have been so abominable as in such a time as this is; Oh! let men take heed of sowing Discord; God calls for the seed of Righteousness.

Prov. 6.
14. 19.

Chap. 16.
28.

This time
most unfit
to sow the
tares of
discord.

And reap in Mercy.

Expos. 1. For the opening of this, I find many carry it, *Mercy to men*: that is, Do you sow the seeds of Righteousness, and let the fruits of Mercy be abundant amongst you. But to carry it according to that that is more like to be the scope of the holy Ghost.

Expos. 2. By *Mercy*, we are to understand, *the Mercy of God*. Now there's Two things that is to be observed in this phrase.

Opened. First, That it is in the Imparative Mood, *Reap in Mercy*, not, *Ye shall reap in Mercy*.

לִפְנֵי
דְּוָן Secondly, In the Original it is, *The Mouth of Mercy*.

דְּוָן
ad or mis- Now for the opening of the words according to these
ericordie. phrases.

For the First, That it is in the Imparative Mood, *Reap in Mercy*; not, *Ye shall reap in Mercy*.

This signifies these two things.

1. The

1. The certainty of the Mercy they ſhall have. And
2. The readineſs of the mercy, that it is ready at hand for them to poſſeſs; juſt as if one ſhould ſay to you in your ſhops, Let me have this commodity and here take your money, that is, here's your money readie and certain.

And then, from the other word, *In the mouth of Mercy*.

Now if the Translators had tranſlated it thus, *Sow in Righteouſneſs, and reap in the mouth of Mercy*, it would have been obſcure: but thoſe that underſtand the Hebrew tongue, know the meaning of this Phraſe to be nothing but thus much. The mouth of a thing is uſed for the proportion and meaſure of a thing, you ſhall have it thus in *Lev. 27. 16.* (the ſame Scripture that I quoted before for another purpoſe) *Thy eſtimation ſhall be according to the ſeed thereof.* Now the word in the Hebrew is, The eſtimation ſhall be to the *mouth of the ſeed*, that is, according to the proportion of the ſeed ſo ſhall the eſtimation be. And ſo you have it in *Exod. 16. 16.* *Gather every man according to what he ſhall eat.* It is the ſame here, *To the mouth of every man*, in a proportion according to what's fit for every man. *Exod. 16. 16.*

You ſhall ſow in Righteouſneſs.

Thus, *Sow in Righteouſneſs*, it's a poor ſeed that we ſhall ſow: now God doth not ſay, you ſhall reap in Righteouſneſs, but in *Mercy*, from the *mouth of Mercy*. You take out of the mouth of the ſack, and ſow, but your poor proportion that you ſow, when you come to reap (if you be faithful) you ſhall reap according to the proportion of Mercy, what is fit for a merciful God to do, what is ſutable to the infiniteneſs of my Mercy, ſo you ſhall reap, not ſutable to what you do and your proportion, but look what is ſutable to the infiniteneſs of my mercy that you ſhall reap: It was ſo towards the *Jews*, if their obedience was but external, yet they ſhould have mercy beyond their

Men that
are in
mean im-
ploymēt's
encoura-
ged.

outward obedience: but if it be applied to those that live in the times of the Gospel, indeed that which comes from you being so mixt as it is, is but poor, yet you may expect to reap, not according to what you do, but according to what may manifest the infinite mercy of an infinite God; every man that shall in the uprightness of his heart, that is never so weak, and is employed in very poor, and mean services, yet if their hearts be upright they shall not reap according to the meanness of the work, but look what glory and happiness is futable for an infinite God in way of infinite Mercy to bestow, that they shall have *in the mouth of Mercy, futable to Mercy.* Thus you have the meaning of the word.

Obl. 1.

Now observe: First, *As a man sows so shall he reap;* Though he shall reap more than he sows, yet he shall reap in the same kind; if he sows wickedness, he shall not reap mercy; but he that sows righteousness, he shall reap mercy. It is a mocking of God, for men to think that though they sow wickedness yet they shall reap mercy, therefore saith the Apostle in *Gal. 6. 7. As a man sows, so shall he reap.* God is not mocked, if thou thinkest to reap mercy when thou sowest wickedness, thou mockest God to his very face; If a man should go and sow Tares and say, I shall have a good crop of Wheat, would not you think that man mad, or he should think you a fool to tell you so and you beleeve him? So for you to think that either God or man should beleeve that you should have mercy when you sow not righteousness (I say) it is to mock God, and know, God is not mocked, for what a man sows, that shall he also reap, and thy fruit shall be another manner of fruit, Thou shalt rent that which shall be bound in bundels, and thou bound together with it, and cast into unquenchable fire: But those that sow righteousness, there's never a seed of theirs shall be lost, they shall be recompenc'd for all their pains, & labor, & sufferings, for so saith the Lord, *Pf. 126. 6. That those that sow in tears, they shall reap in joy, there shall be*

Pf. 126. 6.

an

an aſſuring fruit to thoſe that ſow in Righteouſneſs, for Righteouſneſs it is the moſt precious thing in the world, Gospel-
Righte-
ouneſſe
the moſt
precious
thing in
the world if it be true Goſpel Righteouſneſs, it is (I ſay) more worth, one right act is more worth than Heaven and Earth; God will not loſe that ſeed, it's precious ſeed, there is more of God in one righteous Act of a Godly man than there is in all the works of Creation and Providence, (except Angels and Saints) than in all the whole frame of Creation.

The reaſon is this, Becauſe in all the Creation Gods The Rea-
ſon. Glory is there but paſſively, God works there and it is paſſively, and holds forth his glory; But now, when it comes to the Righteous Acts of the Saints, there is an Active way of glorifying God, there's an act of Gods life, There's an Act of the very Image of God, and the Life of God, and the Divine Nature is there, and therefore there is more of God in the working of Righteouſneſs than in any thing elſe beſides.

Oh! let the Saints get a price upon the actions of Righteouſneſs, though there be much evil mingled, yet there's a great deal of the glory of God in every Action. If we were but grounded in this principle it would make us abound in the work of the Lord; ſo in the morning and in the evening let not thy hand reſt, truſt God with thy ſeed, do not be deterred with this difficulty and the other, *He that obſerves the wind (in Eccleſ. 11.) he ſhall not ſow; and he that regards the clouds, he ſhall not reap.* Uſe.

Eccle. 11.6 Is it a duty that God requires of thee; do not think, Oh! but it's windy weather, and ill weather: no, but ſow it, *Sow it in righteouſneſs,* and commit it to God, and thou ſhalt reap. Oh! bleſſed are thoſe who have ſown much for God in their life time, Oh! the glorious harveſt that theſe ſhall have, the very Angels ſhall help them to take in their Harveſt at the great day, and they need not take thought for Barns, the very Heavens ſhall be their Barns, and Oh the joy that there ſhall be in that Harveſt, and the Angels will help to ſing the Harveſt ſong that they ſhall ſing that have been Sowers

Bro. 20 4. in Righteousness; but the confusion of face which will be upon those that were not willing to endure difficulty in plowing and sowing, The sluggard will not plow because it's cold: and therefore shall beg in Harvest, and shall have nothing: in Harvest he will be crying for mercy, Lord, mercy now; But what fruits of Righteousness? No fruits of Righteousness, no Mercy. *Oh! Reap in Mercy*, that's a very observable expression as we have in all the Book of God, Not reap in Righteousness, but reap in Mercy.

From whence our Note is, *That after all we do, yet we have need of Mercy.* Let us be the most plentiful in sowing the seeds of Righteousness, yet we are unprofitable servants after we have done all.

Object. It is true, An Act of Righteousness hath much in it.

Answ. Yea, but it's Gods, so much as there is in it, it's bad, and after we have done all we had need come to God as beggars to cry for mercy; those men that have liv'd the most holy lives that ever men did live in this world, yet wo to them if they have not mercy; if they have not a Righteousness beyond their own, If mercy comes not in to plead for them, wo to *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob* if mercy comes not in to plead for them, if at the great day if they have nothing to tender up to God but their own righteousness they are certainly lost and undone for ever. Al that we can do is infinitely unworthy of the Majesty of God, *Oh! the text that you have in 1 Chron. 29. 14.* when the people did offer so much to God for the building of his Tabernacle, Mark how *David* was affected with it, *Who am I (saith David?) and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things came of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.* And when *David* in *1 Chron. 22. 14.* when *David* had provided a thousand thousand Talents of silver, and an hundred thousand talents of gold for the building of the Temple of God, besides brass and iron, without

1 Chron.
29. 14.

Chap. 22.
14.

without weight, yet when all comes to all, *Out of my poverty have I offered this*; ſo Arias Montanus turns it: In your books it is, *In my trouble have I done this*, but the ſame word that ſignifies trouble and affliction, ſignifies poverty likewise, and ſaith David, after al this, yet in my poverty have I done this; whereas this was a mighty thing that was offered. I remember Sir Walter Rawleigh, it is in the 17. Chap. of his 2^d Part, and 9th Sect. he reckons up the ſum of what David did there prepare for the Temple of the Lord, & he makes it more than any King in the world is worth, he makes it to come to three thouſand, three hundred and thirty, and three Cart-load of Silver, allowing two thouſand weight of Silver, or ſix thouſand pound ſterling, to every Cartload; beſides threeſcore and ſeventeen Millions of French Crowns: and yet when he had done all, *Out of my poverty have I done this*. As if he ſhould ſay, Lord, what is this in reſpect of thee who art the great God? If thou wilt but accept of this, I ſhall be infinitely bound to thee.

Oh my brethren, let us learn for ever after all our duties not to be proud, keep your hearts low and humble before God; Hath God enabled thee to ſow in Righteouſneſs? our hearts are puſt up preſently: Oh no, thou muſt keep thy heart ſtill under. Alas! ſuch is the proudneſs of our ſpirits, if we be but enlarged a little in Prayer we are ready to be puſt up preſently: Oh! what's this to the ſervice that a creature owes to the bleſſed and eternal God? hadſt thou ſpent all thy daies ſince thou hadſt any underſtanding, night and day in the work and ſervice of God, hadſt thou been the greateſt Inſtrument of Gods ſervice that ever was in the world, yet thou haſt cauſe to lie down at Gods Mercy-ſeat and cry, *Mercy, Lord, Mercy* for a poor wretched vile Creature after thou haſt done al, we are ſo unable to do any thing our ſelves. It's an expreſſion of Luther, *The very Act of Thankſgiving is from God*: And therefore be humbled, and cry, *Grace, grace to al that hath been*: And let all publick Inſtruments not take too much upon them, but

Arias
Mont.
translated
ב עניי
in pauper-
tate affli-
ctione mea.

Rawleighs
Hiſt. of
the World
part 2. C.
17. § 9.
The qua-
ntity of
treasure
that David
offered.
1 Chron.
22. 14.
interpre-
ted.

Ule

Ipſa grati-
arum actio
Luth,

but lie low, And there's a man that's worth his weight in Gold, that can be an Instrument of great and publick work, and yet lie low before the Lord. Oh! did we but know God we would be so after our duties, we would be low.

There's a notable story I find concerning *Cyprian* when he came to suffer martyrdom, and (you will say) that was a great service, to lay down his life for God: In his last prayer he had these two expressions, which are remarkable in it. The first expression was this, **Lord* (saith he)

Cyprian's
prayer at
his Mar-
tyrdom.

* *Paratus sum propter*
nomen tuum victimam
sanguinis fundere, &
quodcumq; tormentum
sustinere, Cum eleva-
veris confringere terrā,
sub qua fissura terrarū
me absconditurus sum: cui
monti dicturus sum,
eadit super me? cui
colli, tege me?

I am prepared to pour forth the very sacrifice of my blood for thy Name sake, yea, Lord, I am prepared here to suffer any torment whatsoever. These two expressions he had. You will say, Now surely this man might stand upon his terms with God. (But he goes on) But when thou doest lift up thy self to shake the Earth, Lord (saith he) under what cleft of the rock shall I hide my self, to what mountain shall I speak even to fall upon me? As if

he should say, Lord, though I be here ready to give up my body to be massacred for thee, to give up my blood to be an offering, and to suffer any torment, yet when I consider what a God I have to do withal, if thou shouldest deal with me as I am in my self, Oh! I must cry to the Rocks to cover me, and the Hills to fall upon me. Oh! this should teach us to keep our hearts low and humble after we have done the greatest work whatsoever. I remember one of the *Germane* Devines when he was full of fears and doubts, when he was to die: say some to him, You have been so imployed, and have been so faithful, why should you fear? Oh! (he gives this Answer) *The Judgments of man and the Judgments of God are different; I am to go before the great and All-seeing God: though it's true, God would not have us daunted with any terrible apprehensions of him, but yet he would have us be posselt with reverence so as to be humbled when we think what a God it is we have*

A German
Ministers
speech at
his death

have to do withal: you *muſt* reap in mercy, Oh ! this ſhall be the ſong of the Saints to all eternity, *Mercy, Mercy : Not unto us, Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name be the praiſe.*

And then the other Note from that expreſſion that we have there is, *That God will give abundantly above our works.* Oh ! it's a point that hath very much encouragement to poor troubled ſinners that are low ; raiſe up thy faith, it's not what thy work is, though it be low and mean, and though there be many failings in thy work, yet is there up-rightneſs, are they ſeeds of Righteouſneſs that thou haſt ſown, thou ſhalt reap according to what ſhall honor the mercy of an infinite God at laſt. I remember *Alexander* when he was giving a gift to a poor man, Oh ! the poor man dar'd not receive it, it was too great : yea, but faith he, though that be too great for thee to receive, yet it is not too great for me to give. So I may ſay to poor ſouls, when they hear of the glorious promiſes to poor people, Oh ! their hearts are ready to think, this is too good news to be true, it is too great a mercy for thee to receive, as thou art in thy ſelf, but if God will give according to the proportion of his mercy, it is not too great for him to give. *Obl. 2.* *Alexander*

Now that's the way that God will deal with thoſe that are in Covenant with him, that have all their fruit to come from the ſeed of righteouſneſs : Chriſt in the heart. I ſay there the Lord will deal according to the proportion of infinite Grace.

Take this one Meditation, That where there is any up-rightneſs when thou ſhalt come to reap from God thou ſhalt reap ſo much from God as muſt manifeſt to all Angels and Saints to all eternity, what the infinite Mercy of an infinite God can do, and that's enough one would think; the pooreſt Chriſtian that doth but the leaſt for God when he comes to reap ſhall have an Harveſt that muſt manifeſt the infinite riches of the infinite mercy of God, and what he is able to do for the raiſing up of a Creature to glory. *An encouraging meditation to poor ſouls in their mean endeavors*

Comfort

Comfort thy self in this, in thy poor low condition in which thou art, and in the performing of thy poor services. Thus for the manner of the Phrase.

Break your fallow ground; for it is time to seek the Lord till he come and rain Righteousness upon you.

Break up your fallow ground &c.] The Prophet exhorted them in the words before, to *sow in Righteousness*, that they might reap *Mercy*.

Expos.
The Co-
herence.

But you must not sow without plowing, that were a preposterous way, therefore though the words come after, yet the thing is to be done before. Look that you plow up the fallow ground: you have been sinful and ungodly in your way, It will not be enough for you now to set upon some good actions, we will do better, we will do such and such good things that God requires of us: No, that's not the first work you must set upon, but it must be to plow, to plow up your fallow grounds.

Obs. I.

In this expression you have here implied, first, *That the hearts of men naturally are as fallow grounds*, nothing but thorns and bryars grows upon them, they are unfit for the Seed of the Word. And by this word is here meant these three things; when he bids them plow up their fallow grounds.

First, The work of humiliation, the Truths of God, both of the Law and of the Gospel must get into their hearts, and rend up their hearts, even rend it up as the plow doth rend up the ground.

And secondly, That weeds, thorns, and bryars must be turned up by the roots, the heart must be cleer'd of them; It is not enough to weed out a weed here and there, and to pluck out a thorn here and there, but plow up the ground, turn all upside down, and get up all the baggagely stuff and thorns that was in your hearts heretofore.

And then thirdly, Get a softness to be in your hearts;

as when the ground is plowed, that which was before hard on the outside, and bak'd by the heat of the Sun, being now turned up there is a soft mould of the ground, and so by the softness of the mould of the ground it is prepared to receive seed.

There are many evils in us that we would reform, but we have not been humbled for them, for our ceremonies, and subjection to * false Government of the Church, Who hath bin humbled for these things, as sin? We reform them as things inconvenient, but not being humbled for them as sin, the very roots of these things are in the hearts of many, so as if times should change, a distinction would serve their turn to come and submit to them again, so that we sow before we plow. I find in Jer. 4. 3. you have this exhortation even in terminis, That, *They must plow up the fallow-ground of their hearts* (only exprest a little further) *They must not sow among thorns.* They must not think to mingle that which is good with that which is evil, it may be a few good seeds are brought into a business, yea, but there is a great deal of evil. My Brethren, take heed of being deceived that way; many though they do not intend to deceive you, yet they may deceive you by mixing some good things with a great many evil, and therefore examin things. But I note this place in *Jeremiah* the rather from the consideration of the time of *Jeremiah's* Pro-

** Subjection is either passive and involuntary; or active and willing. Again, Government may be false essentially and of it self, or peraccidents and by reason of some adjuncts. Lastly some things are such as the corruptions of them, may be sooner discerned by a consciencious eye: others such as, by reason of their similitude to Divine Institution or practice, and their Antiquity and Prescription, cannot so soon, if at all, be certainly concluded evil; see Mr. John Cottons Letter in New-England to Mr. Williams, printed London 1643. for Benjamin Allen in Popes-head-Alley.*

See Nath. Rogers's letter out of New-England concerning this point. Printed in Lond. for Christoph. Meredith in Pauls-yard.

Jer. 4. 3.

phesie. You shall find that the time of *Jeremiahs* Prophe-
sie was in *Josiahs* time. Now the time of *Josiah* was a time
of great reformation, there was very much reformation in
his time, yea, but saith *Jeremiah*, What though you did re-
form, what though you do many things, you sow among
thorns, you do not plow up the ground, you are not hum-
bled, the roots of your sin are not got out of you, and
therefore though there be a great deal of ill stuff that seems
to be cast out, and many good things are set upon in the
Worship of God that was not formerly, yet you must plow,
plow up your fallow grounds. The holy Ghost joyning of
them together, *Sow Righteousness, and plow up your fallow
ground.*

This Note I would have you observe, That there are
some that do *Sow*, and *not Plow*, and there are others that
do *Plow*, and *not Sow*, but we must joyn both toge-
ther.

There are that do *Plow*, and *not Sow*; that is, They (it
may be) are troubled for their sin, it may be much humbled
for their sin, but they do not reform, after their Humilia-
tion there doth not follow Reformation.

Now as Reformation, where Humiliation hath not gone
before, usually comes to little purpose, so Humiliation
where Reformation follows not after, comes likewise to
little purpose. In *Isa. 28. 24.* Doth the Husbandman
plow all day to sow?

The text is brought to note thus much, *That God observes
his times*; and that is the scope of the text, that we must
not be offended because that the Lord doth not do things as
we would have him alwaies, that is, he lets wicked men
prosper sometimes, and the godly suffer afflictions, but as
if the holy Ghost should say here, let God alone with his
work, God observes his times and seasons, as the Plow-man
doth, he doth not alwaies plow; so God hath his times
and seasons and knows when to relieve his Church and af-
flict his Church, and when the wicked shall prosper and
be.

be brought into adverſity, God inſtructions the Plow-man to know his ſeaſon, and ſo doth he, and therefore be not offended. And ſo ſhould we know our ſeaſons, we ſhould obſerve our times to be humbled and reform, to reform and be humbled. But this for the Reformation of a State.

But the plowing of the heart, that's the thing that is here eſpecially intended, and I deſire to apply it particularly to every man and woman. Thoſe who have ſuch ſore necks who cannot bear the yoke, yet you muſt be Plow-men and Plow-women, for *Alice Driver* that I told you of, her father brought her up to plow, and both men and women, the daintieſt Ladies of all muſt hold this plow that is here ſpoken of. Now for this plowing of humbling your hearts it is for the getting in of Truths into your ſpirits, that may rend up your hearts, Ple name ſome few Truths that are as it were the Plow-ſhare, that you muſt not only know them, but labor to get them into your hearts.

As firſt, That ſuch is the vileness of every ſin, as it ſeparates the ſoul from God and puts it under an eternal Curſe. This one Truth, you muſt get this into your hearts, and get it deep into your hearts, it will help to unloosen the roots of the thorns and bryars that are there, the ſetled apprehenſion of this Truth.

And then ſecondly, This Truth : That, there is ſuch a breach between God and my ſoul by ſin, that all the power in all the Creatures in Heaven and Earth is not able to make up this breach, here is a ſharp plow-ſhare to get into the heart.

And then thirdly, This Truth, that by nature I am full of this ſin, my heart is full of it, all the faculties of my ſoul are filled with ſin that is of ſuch an hainous nature. Here is a ſharp plow-ſhare to get into the heart.

And then fourthly, That every action that ever I have done in all my life, in my unregenerate eſtate, it is nothing elſe but ſin, nothing elſe but ſin that hath ſuch a vile nature.

Yea further, That if any sin be pardoned to me it is by vertue of a price paid that is more worth than ten thousand worlds: *This Truth*. Now here's the Gospel as well as the Law, for the plowing is but the spiritualness of the Law, the Truths of the Law in a Gospel way, for you must take notice that the Law [as Law] accepts of no humiliation for sin, it is as it is reveal'd in a Gospel way, in a Gospel way it doth tend to humiliation, for let men be humbled never so much, the Law never accepts of them for their humiliation, but the Law in a Gospel way so it comes to humble the soul so as to do it good. Now therefore the Consideration of the Truths that the Law requires, having reference to the Gospel they serve for the humbling of the soul; Now get in these truths and see what they will do in thy Soul, you must work them in, And let conscience be put on to draw this plow, These are as the Plow-share, and the working of Conscience is the drawing of this plow; while the plow stops (as when it meets with a thorn and bryar) now a strong Conscience will draw it on, and will make the thorns and bryars to be rent up by the roots, if the Conscience be put upon with strength to draw these Truths in the soul; and though they put you to pain, yet you must be content to draw them on in the soul; And if these and the like Truths be got into thy soul, and thou beest at plow, and thy Conscience be drawing, This is that I shall say, *God speed the Plow*, yea, God speed these Truths that Conscience is drawing on in the soul, for it may tend to a great deal of good, to prepare thee for the seed that may bring forth Righteousness and Mercy to thy soul for ever. I confess it is a hard work to be thus plowing; Indeed for men and women only to hear Sermons, and be talking and conferring of good things, these things are pretty easie, but to go to plow, to plow with such Truths as these are, to get up the thorns and bryars by the roots, this is a very hard task; but we must be willing to do it, and to continue plowing; as the fallow ground must not only

only be plowed once, but (it may be) it may ſtand in need of plowing the ſecond and third time before it may be fit for the ſeed to be caſt in, and ſo it muſt be with our hearts. It may be ſome of you have got in ſome Truths, and you have been plowing; yea, but ſince that time you have had many weeds and thorns grown up, and you muſt to plowing again; it may be it is divers yeers ago ſince you have been thus plowing, and your hearts have lain fallow all this while, do not think it enough that once you have been humbled, but be often plowing up this fallow ground, you were as good have the plow get into your hearts though it be ſharp, as to have the Sword of Gods Juſtice be upon you. We have in theſe times a wanton generation that have riſen up, that cannot endure to go to plow, they would be doing nothing but taking in the ſweet, (as I told you before in a former Exerciſe) *Treading cut the Corn*. But this plowing they cry out of meerly through a wantonneſs, and tenderneſs of their ſpirits, a ſinful tenderneſs, becauſe they would have nothing but jollity and licentiousneſs in their hearts and waies, yet the Scripture in *Luke, 9. 62.* compares the Miniſters of the Goſpel to the plow; *He that puts his hand to the plow and looketh back, is not fit for the Kingdom of God*, not fit to be employed in the adminiſtration of the Goſpel. Though theſe men cry out ſo much of humiliation for ſin, which is as ſtrange a Generation as ever have riſen up, that ſhould cry out of that, when there's nothing more humbles for ſin than the price that was paid for ſin in the blood of Jeſus Chriſt, and there is no ſuch ſharp plow ſhare as that. If I were to preach one Sermon in all my life for the humbling of men for ſin, I would take a text that might ſhew the great price that was paid for it, and therein open the breach that ſin hath made between God and mans ſoul. But they will not make uſe of the Goſpel neither, ſo much as to be a plow to plow the heart for the work of humiliation.

We muſt
continue
plowing,

elf weeds
wil grow
again,

though
many
years
alter.

Luk. 9. 62.
Miniſters
are the
yelowmen

Well,

The *probatum est*, of preaching the Law, and pressing humiliation.

Well, God hath prospered this work heretofore, and notwithstanding al the wantoness of mens spirits this way, yet (I say) still, *God speed the plow*, God speed this way of plowing the hearts of men, and getting in those Truths that do humble the hearts of men for their sins; these were the Truths that God hath blest in former times, and there's none that ever did live to the honor of the Gospel so much: for this generation that is come up, they talk of the Gospel, but they live not to the honor of it, the Gospel hath not honor by them, nor Jesus Christ hath not honor by them. But the former generation of men, though in some things they might fail, yet certainly God blest them in their way so far as it was according to Truth.

The Reason No mervail though these men bring forth such little fruit of Righteousness, it is, because they sow among thorns, presently they are up at the top, and so confident presently in their way, their seed is among thorns and therefore it doth not prosper. And thus much for this expression about the *plowing up of fallow grounds*, both in reference to general Reformation, and Humiliation, and concerning mens Souls in particular. It follows;

[This whol discourse is opposite to that, whereby some would comfort beleivers in their sins and sorrows: The sum is, that of our Lord Christ: Repent, and beleeve the Gospel: and of the Apostle, Repentance from dead works and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ, Mark. 1.15. Act. 20. 21. Heb. 6.1. Rom. 7.24. 1 Cor. 11.31. 2 Cor. 7.9.10. Chap. 12. 21.]

For it is time to seek the Lord.

Expos. 1.

It is time.

To have time to seek the Lord, a great mercy.

First, Yet you have *time* to seek the Lord; 'Tis well for you that you have *time to seek the Lord*; It is mercy that there is any *time* at al to seek the Lord. It might have been *past time* with you for seeking the Lord, God might have forc'd his honor from you in another way, have fecht out his glory from you in your eternal ruin, Oh! 'tis mercy that God will be sought of you, and therefore *plow up your fallow*

Use

fallow ground, and ſow in Righteouſneſs; for it is time to ſeek the Lord. Oh! you that are the oldeſt and wickedeſt, and yet live ſtill, Oh! remember this Scripture; yet, you have time to ſeek the Lord, It is mercy that you have any time to ſeek the Lord: If you did but underſtand what this mercy were, ye would fall down with your faces upon the ground and bleſs the Lord that you have yet time to ſeek him. What do you think thoſe damned creatures in Hell would now give, if it might be ſaid of them, That they have time to ſeek the Lord, if they might have but one hour more to ſeek the Lord with any hope to obtain mercy from him? What you are now, they were not long ſince: Oh! do you fear and tremble, leſt, if you not ſeeking the Lord, you ere long be, as now they are, that it ſhall be ſaid of you, Time is gon, time to ſeek the Lord is paſt; I will not now be ſought of you; Seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near, It was a ſpeech once of a woman in terror of Conſcience, when divers came to her (it was in Cambridge) divers Miniſters and others coming to her in way of comforting of her, ſhe looks with a gaſtly countenance upon them, and gives them only this Answer, Call time again: If you can call time again, than there may be hope for me: but time is gone.

The ſaying of a diſpairing woman in Cambridge

Oh! that we had hearts to prize our time, to ſeek the Lord therefore while he may be found. And when thou goeſt home, fall down upon thy face before the Lord, and bleſs him that yet it is time to ſeek the Lord. It is time for the publick, through Gods mercy it is time, yet for us to ſeek the Lord. It might have been paſt time; and who almoſt that did deſire to know any thing of Gods mind for ſeven or eight yeers ago or more, but did think that Englands time was even gone of ſeeking God? But the Lord hath been pleaſed to lengthen out our time to ſeek Him; and this we ſhould prize and make uſe of.

ſecondly,

Obf. 2.

Secondly, *It is high time to seek the Lord.*

Reaf. 1.

For first, God hath been long time patient towards you. He hath been long suffering, there is a time that the Lord saith, He will be weary with forbearing, and therefore the Lord having suffered so long, it is high time for you to seek him, for you to look about you, lest the Lord should say, That he would be weary in forbearing, and forbear no more. It is fit you should seek the Lord at all times, but now it is high time when God hath been so long suffering towards you; how do you know but that the time for the end of patience is at an end? And that is the second consideration, God hath been long patient.

Reaf. 2.

And 2. *Mercy it is even going, for Judgments are now threatened by the Prophet*: as if the Prophet should say, if ever you will seek him, seek him now, God is going, and Judgments are at hand, and therefore it is high time for you to seek the Lord. As a Prisoner when he is at the Bar, he is pleading a great while when the Judg is at the Bench, but if he sees the Judges ready to rise off the Bench, and if they be gone, then he is gone and undone for ever, then he lifts up his voice, and cries out, Mercy, mercy. So it is high time to seek the Lord, high time, Mercy is going, Judgment is at hand; God as the Judg is going off the Bench, now cry, crie out for your lives or you are undone for ever.

simile

Applicat.

Oh! this may well be applied to us both in the general, and in the particular, it is high time, God hath shewn himself to be going and departing from us, only there hath a company of his Saints been crying, and as the Lord hath been going from us yet they have lifted up their voice and cried to the Lord, so yet he grants us time.

Obf. 3.

And then thirdly, *It is an acceptable time, because now God calls upon you, and he holds forth the Scepter of his Grace towards you, therefore it is now acceptable to seek God, seek him now and he will be found, 2 Cor. 6. Now is*
the

the accepted time, the day of ſalvation, while you do enjoy the 2 Cor. 6.
means of Grace, while God is offering mercy in the Goſpel
it is the accepted time, therefore now is the time to ſeek the
Lord, The miſery of man is great upon him for not know-
ing his time, in Eccleſ. 8. 6. There the wiſe man ſaith, *Here* Eccl. 8. 6
is a time for all things, but therefore is the miſery of man great,
becauſe he knoweth not his time. Oh! 'tis true in this regard,
we know not our time and therefore is our miſery great upon
us. *O that thou haſt known at leaſt in this thy day thoſe* Luk. 19.
things that concern thy peace; miſſing of time is a dangerous 24.
thing; That may be done at one time with eaſe, that can-
not be done at another time with all the labor that poſſibly
may be: Thou canſt not tell what may depend upon one
day, upon one minute, perhaps even eternity may depend
upon this moment, upon this day. A man goes abroad
from his family and gets into company, perhaps into an
Ale-houſe, or Tavern to drink, and there ſpends the day
in wickedneſs; thou doeſt not know but upon that time
the day of thy eternitie may depend, it may be caſt upon
that day; as *Saul* was caſt upon that act of his, ſaith *Samuel*
to him, The Lord had thought to have eſtabliſhed thy King-
dom, but now he will not; ſo God may ſay, Well, notwith-
ſtanding all thy former ſins I would have been content to
have paſt by them, if thou haſt ſought me upon this day :
The conſideration of this would make us take heed how
we ſpend our time, how one ſpends any day in ones life.
A Marriner may do that at one time that he cannot poſſi-
bly do at another. He hath a gale of wind and now he
may quickly get over Sea, but if he ſtaies till another time,
if he would give his heart blood to get over he cannot: and
ſo ſometimes thou haſt ſuch gales of the Spirit of God as
may do good to thy ſoul for ever, take heed thou doeſt not
loſe them, if thou loſeſt them thou maielt be undone for e-
ver. Oh! 'tis fit to wait upon God for our time, and if God
gives us time take heed we do not triſle and ſay, we ſhall
have time hereafter: therefore in Phil. 2. 12, the Apoſtle
O o o ſaith,

*ex hoc mo-
mento æ-
ternitas.*

*An apt
ſimile.*

Phil. 2. 12 *saith, Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling : (and it follows) for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do. What a connexion is there ? If God work the will and the deed, what need I work at all ? Nay, the connexion is thus, Do you work out your salvation with fear and trembling, take all opportunities you can, let the fear of God be upon you, so as to omit no opportunity, for you do absolutely depend upon God, that if he doth withdraw himself from you, you are undone for ever, for you can do nothing of your selves, for it is God that worketh the Will and the Deed. As if we should say to a Marriner, Be careful, take your wind and sail, for al your Voyage depends upon God, if you neglect your opportunity you are gone. It is time for the youngest of all to seek the Lord, As soon as ever you begin to have the dawning of reason it is time for you then to seek the Lord, Oh ! that you did but know your time. Oh ! but what time is it for old ones, for those that have neglected seeking the Lord the most part of their lives ; Is it not high time for you to seek the Lord, who have spent so much of the time of your lives in vanity and folly as you have done ? The remainder of the time you have is uncertain, and yet suppose you should have so long a time as in the course of nature you are like to live, yet many of you cannot have so much time to seek the Lord as you have had in departing from God, you cannot have so much time to honor God as you have had to dishonor him : and therefore is it not time for you to seek the Lord ? I remember it is said of *Themistocles*, that he died about an hundred and seven years of age, and when he was to die, he was grieved upon this ground, *Now I am to die* (saith he) *when I begin to be wise.* And certainly it cannot but be a grief to a man or woman, though they should be godly, to think, Why through Gods mercy, the Lord hath begun to work Grace (I hope) in my heart, yea, but as soon as I begin to know God, and have any heart to serve him in this world, I must be taken out of this world :*

illustrated
by a simile

Themistocles saying
at his
death,

It.

It was a proverbial ſpeech once, *Weighty things to morrow* : *Graviora cras, Plut.* you ſhall find it in Plutarch's lives. Oh! take heed this proverb be not fulfill'd concerning you, *Weighty things to morrow*, take weighty things, things of infinite conſequence while you have time, Let weighty things be regarded then.

It is time to ſeek the Lord.

Time, Certainly our time is now for the publick as much as ever to ſeek the Lord, for never did God give us ſuch an opportunity for honoring him as of late.

Time for
England
to ſeek
God.

Never any Nation in the world had a greater opportunity for ſeeking God and honoring of him than we have had; we were like to have been beſool'd of our opportunity of getting mercy from God: but the Lord hath given it us again, and beſtowed us with an opportunity again after it was got even out of our hands; Oh! let us then catch hold of it now, and bleſs God that we have it even reſtor'd to us again, and let it be a ſtrong argument upon us now to ſeek the Lord, ſeeing we have an opportunity yet to do it, we have the liberty of his Ordinances more fully than ever, let us not be beſool'd of it.

1.

And certainly it is time in a more ſpecial manner now for us, becauſe that things are in ſo great a confuſion, that every body is at their wits end almoſt: alas our wiſe Counſel that is at the ſtern, yet they are ſain to depend upon meer providences, and casualties, and the truth is, there is ſuch a confuſion of things, that if God ſhould ſay to the wiſeſt man in the Land, Well, do you contrive which way you think things ſhould be beſt, and I'll do according to your contrivance, they could ſcarce tell what to ſay, or what to determine of, if God ſhould leave it to them: ſuch a confuſion there is, that in a rational way you could not tell how to determine of things, Is it not time to ſeek the Lord then?

2.

3. We thought it was time to seek the Lord when we were in great danger of the Adversaries; that they would come to our gates. Surely it is as great time to seek the Lord now, to seek the Lord that when he hath delivered us from our enemies that we may not devour one another. And when God hath given us some rest from them and said, Well, all that before you were afraid of was, That the Enemies would prevail and then you could do nothing, but I have queld their power in a great measure, and now set upon the work of Reformation, Oh! we are now at a stand and know not what to do, and we go on in such craftie waies one against another that every one is at a stand. Oh then, it is time for us to fall down upon our faces, to seek God to direct us, to regard the great opportunity that God hath put into our hands.

4. We only now want light to know what to do, and therefore whereas heretofore we have sought God for power that we might be able; now we are to seek God for light that we may know how to improve our ability, seeking God; To labor to put our selves into such a disposition as God doth use to communicate mercy to his People in, besides praying to God. There's those two things in seeking God, Praying to him, and laboring to put our selves into such a way and disposition wherein God doth use to meet with his people, and communicate himself to his People.

Till I come and rain Righteousness upon you.

יורה
יורה
jacere.
docere.

Expos. 1.

The word that is here translated [*Rain*] it doth sometime signifie to *Teach*, it is of the same root; and the Scripture makes use of that similitude of *Rain*, for *Doctrine*; because of the likeness of *Doctrines* distilling as the *Rain*, therefore one word in the Hebrew is used for both. And therefore I find divers in Interpreters go that way, *Ply the work until he teaches Righteousness*; and so it is a Prophecie of the

the *Meſſias*, do you Sow Righteouſneſſ, and plow up your fallow ground, for it is time to ſeek the Lord, till the *Meſſias* ſhall come and teach you the Righteouſneſſ of God. So they carry it. But take it as it is here.

Until he rain Righteouſneſſ. And then there is theſe things 2 prefer-
in it. red.

First, I'll open what is meant by Righteouſneſſ, and then Rain.

By Righteouſneſſ is meant, First, That God will deliver them from oppreſſion, that though they have unrighteous dealing with men, yet they ſhall have righteous dealing with him. And this is a great mercy to a people that God ſhall undertake that there ſhall be nothing but righteous dealings betwixt them and himſelf. Righte-
ouſneſſ,
what?

Secondly, By Righteouſneſſ is meant, The fruit of Gods faithfulneſſ in the fulfilling of all thoſe promiſes of his for good unto them, wherein the Lord doth ſtile himſelf Righteous. (Saith he) If you will now plow up your fallow ground, and ſeek the Lord, the Lord will deliver you from oppreſſion, and the Lord will make good all his faithfulneſſ to you, according to all that good word that he hath promiſed.

And this Righteouſneſſ it ſhall be Rain, that is: First, to note that all their good and help it muſt come from Heaven as the Rain doth, as if the Prophet ſhould ſay, If you look to men, yea, to men in publick place you have little hopes that there ſhould be ſuch righteous dealings, or to expect that the good Word of God in all his Promiſes to his People ſhould be fulfilled, yea, but look to Heaven, ſaith God, I'll rain, it ſhall come down from Heaven by waies that are above nature, that are above the power of man, I'll rain Righteouſneſſ; ſeek him therefore till he rain Righteouſneſſ, be not diſcouraged though you ſhould ſee thoſe in publick place to carry things never ſo unrighteouſly, yet ſeek the Lord till he rain Righteouſneſſ. Rain,
what?

Secondly, By raining Righteouſneſſ is meant, the plenty of Righteouſneſſ, that Righteouſneſſ ſhall come in abundance.

It

It may be now, some men may meet with some Righteous dealings and be encouraged when things are at the best among men, but this Righteousness comes but by drops, yea, but seek the Lord till *He Rain Righteousness*. What is it to have a few drops of water? You may go into your Garden, and with a little pot of Water, water the Herbs; yea, but when it rains down water, then the earth is refreshed. And so saith the Lord here, Seek me till I come with a shower of Righteousness, and rain it down upon you.

Thirdly, *Till he rain Righteousness*. That is, Till I work so graciously in the works of my Righteousness to you, as shall make the Seeds that you have sown to be fruitful, to grow up to the honor of my Name, and to your good. Now there are many godly amongst you, and they sow Righteousness, they do many good Actions, but alas, it is kept down still by the scorching heat of the Oppressors; in places where Oppression prevails, many godly, truly godly men and women they sow much seed of Righteousness, but there is little good comes of it, and all is kept down: yea but saith the Lord, Seek me till I rain Righteousness, Ple rain from Heaven such showers that shall be the fulfilling of my Promises to you, that shall make all your righteous actions grow up to the praise of my Name, and the good of your Brethren, Oh! what a blessed time is this, when there shall be nothing but righteous dealings, and all the faithfulness of God shall be fulfilled, and there shall be plenty.

The Notes are:

- Obf. I. First, *That God will come to sow Righteousness in time*. Those that plow and sow in Righteousness God will come in way of Grace and Goodness to them; Prov. 11. 18. *To him that soweth Righteousness shall be a sure reward*. Be not discouraged you that sow Righteous seed; for it is not with the seed of Righteousness as with the seed that is sown in the earth, for if that do not come up in such a certain time, it will never come up; but you cannot say so of the seed of Righteousness, it will come up.

Secondly

Secondly, *God ſometimes comes not preſently in raining Righteouſneſſ upon his people that do ſow Righteouſneſſ : Seek the Lord till he comes and rains Righteouſneſſ : As if the Prophet ſhould ſay, You have hearts to ſeek the Lord, to be humbled, and reform, to ſow in Righteouſneſſ; well, be not diſcouraged, continue ſeeking, ſtay till he doth rain Righteouſneſſ. After the ſeed is ſown, you would fain have a ſhower the next morning, but (may be) it will not be the next morning, ſtay till Gods time; God doth not alwaies hear the prayers of his people ſo as to answer them when they would. It is very obſervable concerning *Elijah*, at one time when he cried for fire to come down upon the Sacrifice, it came down preſently : but when he cried for rain, he was fain to ſend his ſervant ſeven times : *Elijah* did not get Rain from Heaven ſo ſoon as Fire from Heaven.*

Obſ. 2.

The Third Note is this, *That thoſe that ſeek aright will continue ſeeking God till he comes and rains Righteouſneſſ. There is an excellent Scripture in *Pſalm. 101. 2.* ſaith *David*, I will behave my ſelf wiſely in a perfect way; C when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk in my houſe with a perfect heart. As if the Prophet ſhould ſay, Why Lord, 'tis thy preſence I deſire more than a thouſand worlds, and I'll endeavor to behave my ſelf in my houſe, in my family, not only in the preſence of others, but in my family, in the moſt perfect way I can : Lord, when wilt thou come? It ſeems God did not come and manifeſt Himſelf preſently : though *David* did behave himſelf in a perfect way in his houſe, yet *David* profeſſes he would wait ſtill. There's many Scriptures may be given for this, and many arguments why a gracious heart will not leave over ſeeking till the Lord comes.*

Obſ. 3.

Pſ. 101. 2.
illustrated.

'Tis the Lord I ſeek, and he is a great God, and is fit to be waited on, though he doth not come preſently. We think it is a matter of State, becauſe of the diſtance that there is ſimile. between one and another to make them ſtay, Why ſhould we think much that we ſhould wait upon the great and Infinite.

finite.

Motive
to conti-
nue see-
king God

finite God? And perhaps you pray, and find no benefit; it is fit for you to wait upon God. There is an infinite distance between God and you, *Seek till he comes.* If you do not get that, that you seek for, yet you are doing your duty, and that is enough.

1. This is a very great evil among many, *They are praying and seeking God, but they only have their eyes upon what they shall get by seeking God, and if nothing comes of it, then they are discontented;* whereas merely the consideration of that, that thou art doing thy duty should be enough to quiet thy heart.

2. And then further, *Thou canst not be better certainly than seeking God.* Whither wilt thou go? If thou leavest seeking God thou turnest from thy own mercy to vanity. And hast thou a temptation to leave off seeking God? shalt thou get any thing by it? Certainly thou canst not do better, and therefore seek the Lord, seek the Lord *Till he comes, Isa. 30. 18.* is a most excellent Scripture to uphold the heart in seeking God though God do not seem to come. *The Lord is a God of Judgment; blessed are they that wait for him.* You are not a man or woman of Judgment, you know not when it is a fit time that things should be done; But God is a God of Judgment, he knows how to do things in Judgment; and therefore blessed are they that wait for him. Think of this, and deny your own Judgments, and your own thoughts, and know that you are waiting upon God, that is a God of Judgment, that is infinitely wise to come to his People in a fit season, and to come so that at last you would not wish that he had come sooner.

And know, *That all the while you are waiting, God is working good.* We are waiting upon mens doors, and they take no notice of it: but if we knew that all the time we are a waiting our Petition were a reading and they in consultation about it, and we only waited for the issue of the consultation, it would satisfy us. And so a gracious heart may be assured of this, *Hast thou sought the Lord in the truth*

Isa. 30. 18
explained.

truth of thy heart? The thing is not come yet, but ever ſince thou haſt ſought the Lord the heart of God hath been thinking of that thing which thou ſoughteſt him for, and wilt not thou be ſeeking God ſtill till He doth come?

And then, *While thou art ſeeking God, thou art not altogether without ſome dew*; Indeed God doth not come and rain in ſhowers, that Righteouſneſs that he will hereafter, but ſurely thou haſt dews, thou haſt ſome encouragements, and do not ſlight thoſe dews of Gods Grace that thou haſt, for then thou maieſt ſtay the longer before the ſhowers of Righteouſneſs come; prize the dews of Gods Grace and the ſhowers of Righteouſneſs they will come the ſooner. Many Chriſtians though they have many dews of Gods Grace upon their hearts to reſreſh them, yet becauſe they have not ſhowers they think it is nothing; what haſt thou no dews of Grace? What is it that keeps thy heart ſo tender as it is? Thou wouldeſt not for a thouſand worlds wilfully ſin againſt God, certainly if thy heart were hardened the Truths of God would not get into thy heart ſo as they do: Indeed the rain comes in a viſible way; yea, but there are dews of Grace that come in a ſecret way: Thou doeſt not indeed ſee the comings in of thoſe dews of Grace upon thy heart, yea, but others may ſee the effect of thoſe dews.

And then laſtly, *Seek the Lord till he comes*; why? *Becauſe when he comes he will come more fully a great deal.* It was a notable ſpeech of Mr. Glover the Martyr, when he had been ſeeking God for the raining of Righteouſneſs, he was willing to give his life for God, and yet God had abſented himſelf from him, Oh! God was not come, he complain'd to his fellow *Auſtin*, that God was not come; well, but ſaith his friend, he will come; and give me a ſign before you die, if you feel the Spirit of God come to your heart: well, the poor man continued all night, when he was to be

burnt the next day, and yet he was not come, yea, the Sheriff came to carry him to the Stake, and yet his heart was dead. But he goes on till he came within the sight of the stake, and then the holy Ghost came into his heart, and fil'd him with joy, so that he lifts up his hands and voice, and cries, *He is come, he is come.* Now there came a shower of Righteousness upon his heart, he was content to seek the Lord till he came.

Obf. 4

And that may be a fourth Note, *That those that are content to seek God till he comes, when he comes he will come with plentiful showers in raining Righteousness.* Oh! how many! how many cursed Apostates are there that will curse themselves one day for not continuing seeking of God till he comes? Perhaps there are some that have had some convictions of conscience, and because they have not had encouragement presently they were discouraged, and so thou hast basely gone back, and now God hath left thee, and thou art become a base useless Hypocrite, and art a dishonor, and disgrace to Religion, and all because thou wouldest not stay till God came: Oh! but others staid till God came, and God came at length so fully that now they bless his Name that they did stay. I remember I have read of *Columbus* that was the first that found out the *West Indies*, and the story saith of him, that his men were even weary, he was so long in sailing, & so they were resolved they would come back again, that they would, so that then all their labor had been lost. But *Columbus* he came to them with all intreaties to go on a little time, and at length prevail'd with them to go on but three daies longer. So they were content to venture three daies, and within that three daies they came to see Land, and so discovered those parts of the world that were so little known to these parts. Now what a miserable thing had it been if they had come back and lost all their Voyage? Thus it is with many a soul sailing towards Heaven and eternal life, Thou hast been a long time tost up and down in the waves of the Sea, the waves of

Christoph.
Columbus.

of Temptation, and of Trouble, and thou thinkeſt it's beſt to come back again: Oh! ſtay a while, do not limit three daies, but go on; yet it may be ſaid of ſome that had they proceeded in their voiage but three daies more, they might have come and ſeen, whereas now they have loſt all. Oh! ſeek the Lord then till he comes and rains Righteouſneſs.

And then the fifth is this, *The help of thoſe that ſeek God* Obſ. 5.
it is from Heaven. Till HE Rain. They do not ſo much expect help from Creatures as from Heaven, they look up to Heaven for their help; when all comforts in creatures fail they look upwards and there ſee their help.

And then the ſixt Note is this, *That the fruit of Gods coming* Obſ. 6.
to his People after ſeeking, it is, To make them fruitful, that's the end of Gods coming, the end of the Mercy of God in coming to people, it is, to make their ſeeds to grow up and be fruitful. It may be you would have God come, but wherefore, to bring comfort to you? No, the end of Gods coming to his Saints, it is, *To make them fruitful,* and this would be an Argument of the ſincerity of your hearts in ſeeking God: When you are ſeeking him, what do you ſeek him for, only for comfort, and peace, and to eaſe you from troubles? Yea, but do you ſeek God that you may be fruitful? The Hypocrites ſeek to have Grace that they may have Comfort, and the godly ſeeks Comfort that they may have grace, ſo it is, *That God may rain Righteouſneſs:* I am as a dry ground, Oh! that God would come with the influence of his Grace to make me fruitful in the works of holineſs: Many of you would have comfort, (as now in theſe daies mens ears are altogether ſet upon comfort) but is your comfort the ſhowers of God? doth it make the ſeeds of Righteouſneſs fructifie in your hearts? Certainly you can have little comfort of that comfort that is not as rain from Heaven to bring up the fruits of Righteouſneſs in your hearts, and in your lives.

Hypocrites
 ſeek Grace
 for Com-
 fort chief-
 ly, Saines
 ſeek Com-
 fort for
 Grace.

Obf. 7.

And then feventhly, *Gods coming with blessings upon thofe that feek him, it is, Righteoufnefs*: that is, *The good that they have as a fruit of feeking of him, it is, The fulfilling of Gods Word, it is but Gods Faithfulnefs that was engaged for it.* *Jesus Chrift had purchafed it by his blood, and they had a bond for it before, what ever good they have from God.*

1 Joh. 1.
9.

It is an excellent Note to help us both in our feeking God, and in the comforts that we have. When we are feeking God we are not feeking God meerly as a gratuity. Though in reference to us it is only free Grace, but to Chrift it is, *Righteoufnefs*, it is that which Chrift hath purchafed, therefore faith Saint John, *If you confeß your fins*: he doth not fay, it is mercy for God to forgive them, but it is *Just with God*. And fo when you receive a mercy from God, you are not to look upon it as a meer Alms, though in reference to your felves indeed it is fo, but in reference to Chrift your head it is *Righteoufnefs*, it is that which Chrift hath purchafed, and that which God gives you as a fruit of his faithfulnefs, as wel as of his free Grace, when thou art feeking of God let not only the eye of thy faith be upon the Grace and Mercy of God, but upon the very *Righteoufnefs of God*.

Obf. 8.

And then another Note may be, *Though the good we do is our own good, yet God rewards it as if he got by it*: God makes Promifes to us that if we do thus and thus we fhall enjoy fuch and fuch mercies.

Sow to your felves.

When we fow, God gives us leave to aim at our felves, but yet when God comes to reward us, he doth reward us as if it were only for him and not for our felves, he rewards us in waies of *Righteoufnefs*.

And thus much for this Verfe of raining *Righteoufnefs*. God hath another rain for the wicked and ungodly, in
Pfalms,

Pſalm, 11. he rains ſnares, and fire and brimſtone upon them.

VER. 13.

Ye have Plowed wickedneſs, ye have reaped iniquity, ye have eaten the fruit of Lyes.

NOtwithſtanding all exhortations, and all offers of mercy, yet you have gone quite contrary (ſaith the Prophet:) Inſtead of breaking from your iniquities, you have plowed your iniquities. The meaning is this: You have taken pains to propagate that which is evil, you have taken pains to prepare for wicked things and to do all you can for the propagation of that which is evil, both in your ſelves and others. That is the plowing of wickedneſs. *The plowing of the wicked is ſin, their endeavors, (that is the meaning) their labor it is eſpecially for the furtherance of ſin, the very ſtrength of their ſpirits is let out for the furtherance of their ſin; In Job, 4. 8. Even as I have ſeen, they that plow iniquity, and ſow wickedneſs reap the ſame: to plow it is to endeavor, and labor for iniquity, for ſo the word that is here tranſlated Plow, it ſignifies, to Frame things, to Work things, to Endeavor any thing with all our might; that is the ſignification of the word. You have ſet your hearts altogether upon this work, for the furthering of wickedneſs, in thinking of it, in plodding about it, in ſtirring of one another, and doing all you can in your endeavors for the furtherance of wickedneſs.*

Yea, You have been willing to go through all difficulties to accompliſh your wicked intentions: As we read in *Micah, 7. 3.* it is a notable Scripture, it ſhews the ſtrong endeavors of wicked men after their ſin. *They do evil (ſaith the text) with both hands earneſtly.* It is a very ſtrange text, they are willing to take pains and plow for their ſin.

Expoſ. in general.

Prov. 21. 4.

Job, 4. 8.

חַרַּשׁ

Micah, 7. 3.
Vt beneficiant, Munſter.

לַחֲטִיב
Vel nituntur ut (mala ſua) bona faciunt; i.e. juſtificent.

Oh!

Some take more pains to perish than others to be saved,

yet complain of any difficulty in Gods waies.

Cardinal *Wolsey*. See the Book of Martyrs.

Who cannot die in peace (without serious repentance)

Oh! how many are there that take more pains to go to Hell, than others do that go to Heaven? they will so struggle, and suffer for their sin, willing to break with their friends to accomplish their sinful lusts, willing to venture their estates, to hazard their healths, willing to do any thing in the world, they are willing to go through all difficultie that they may have their sin: Yet they will not plow for God: Oh! they complain of any little difficultie in the waies of God; but complain of no difficultie in the waies of sin, Oh! what a wicked and wretched heart is this, to be offended with any hardness in Gods waies, and yet be content to endure any hardness at all in the waies of sin! Oh! that we were but as instrumental for God, and willing to plow, as hard as others do for that which is sin. And Oh! when you shall come to die, to reap the fruit of your labor, what terror do you think will this be to your consciences, when it must tell you that you have taken more pains in the waies of wickedness than ever you did in the waies of God? As it was said of Cardinal *Wolsey*, when he was to die, Oh! saith he, *Had I but served God as diligently as I have served the King, he would not have given me over in my gray hairs.* So when you shall come to die and your consciences shall say, Oh! that I had but broken as much sleep to prayer and seeking God, Oh! that I had but ventur'd my estate, and name, as much in the waies of God as in the waies of sin, it had been happy for me; Is it possible that any of you can die in peace of conscience, and yet your consciences shall tell you that you never took that pains for God as you have done for sin? In a good motion that is for God, if others do it you will agree and go on with them: I, but you will not plow hard for it; but in things that are sutable to your lusts, you will not only move such a thing, and joyn with others, but you will plow hard for it, Oh! what pity is it, that mens parts and

and ſtrength ſhould be laid out ſo much upon that which is evil ! Men that have active ſpirits, Oh ! how instrumental might they be for God if their necks were but in Gods yoke ? but they, all the daies of their lives, have their necks in the Devils yoke, and are plowing for the Devil all their daies, and they will reap accordingly.

Now this plowing wickedneſs was eſpecially their way of falſe worſhip, Oh ! they endeavored there, they plowed hard to get up their falſe worſhip, their worſhip at *Dan* and *Bethel*, and not to go to *Jeruſalem* to worſhip. It follows. Expoſ. in partic.

You have plowed wickedneſs, ye have reaped iniquity.

You do not hear of any ſowing ; for the truth is, there need no ſowing for wickedneſs, there need be but the preparation, do but plow, that is, do but prepare the ground, and wickedneſs will come up alone. When you plow Righteouſneſs you muſt ſow the ſeeds of Righteouſneſs.

Ye reap iniquity.

The meaning is this, You have your hearts deſire to bring about your own ends, to have what you plowed for. Sometimes men do plow and take a great deal of pains in that which is evil, and God croſſes them ; but at other times God lets them reap : that is, Do you labor for to promote ſuch a thing though it be not according to Gods mind, it may be God will let you have it ; well, you plow for it, and you ſhall have it ; and doeſt thou bleſs thy ſelf in that ? Oh ! wo to thee, it is a woful harveſt that thou haſt, it is a fearful curſe for any man or woman for to have their hearts deſires ſatisfied in their ſin, it were a thouſand times better that thy plowing were to no purpoſe at all, that all thy labors and endeavors were quite loſt ; thou art loth to loſe thy endeavors in the waies of ſin, Oh ! but it were a thouſand

thousand times better that thy endeavors were all lost than that thou shouldest attain that which thou plowest for.

עוֹלָה

But I find the word that signifies *Iniquity*, is used in Scripture to signifie, *The punishment of iniquity*: for the Hebrews have the same word to signifie *Sin*, and the *punishment of sin*.

What is
here meant
by iniquity.

Or thus, which I think the holy Ghost hath some aim at, *You plow* (saith he) *wickedness, and reap iniquity*; the plowing was for their false worship, and their reaping was iniquity: I beseech you observe this Note further.

Obs.

That, *The fruit of false worship it is the encrease of sin in a Nation*.

You plow wickedness, for so afterwards it is called, *The great wickedness*; and the fruit of that, it is the encrease of much sin, it brings forth a harvest for sin. When men have striven to set up any false worship, and have gotten it up, what is the fruit of it? There grows presently a formality in Religion, Men have a Religion, and yet they enjoy their lusts, for only the true Worship of God is that which will not stand with mens lusts, therefore when men set up any kind of false Worship, this will be the fruit, there will be a formality in Religion, and this will please men exceeding well, for they can live in worldliness, and licentiousness, and this will be the fruit of it. And verily my Brethren, this is one main thing, that makes carnal, loose hearts contend so much for a loose kind of worship, that they may have looseness in their waies so much the more: Endeavoring for this kind of evil the fruit of it will be the reaping of iniquity.

Why carnal men contend for superstition.

You have eaten the fruit of lyes.

Lyes here what?

First, What are those lyes that they eate the fruit of?

I.
Reasons
for it.

First, Those arguments by which you justify your selves in your iniquity. Yea, but they are but the fruit of lyes. They

They would ſet up a way of falſe worſhip, but they would have ſome Reaſons for it, they would have ſome arguments to defend it, and thoſe, Oh how they hugged and cloſed with them, and let any one bring and ſhew them that ſuch a thing may be proved thus and thus by ſuch an argument; now becauſe they had a mind to the thing, their hearts cloſed upon thoſe arguments, and they fed upon it, it did them good at their hearts.

Secondly, *You feed upon Lyes*; that is, Thoſe comforts that you have from the way of falſe worſhip, the way that you ſet up you have a great deal of comfort in it, and you are very glad that it thrives, It is but a Lye (ſaith God.)

2.
Comforts
from it.

Thirdly, *Their hopes that they had when that way was eſta- bliſhed of theirs*, they had ſuch hopes that all ſhould be ſo well, and that there ſhould be no more trouble between them and *Jeruſalem*: I, but you feed upon *Lyes* (ſaith God) It is but a Lye that you feed upon.

3.
Hopes by
it.

The Fourth Lye that they fed upon was, *The Interpretation of Gods dealings, in bleſſing them for the way of their falſe worſhip which they had ſet up*; then all kind of outward bleſſings which they had they made this Interpretation of them, the goodneſs of God to them for that which they had done: As that is uſual in places where there is any thing in matters of Religion altered, though it be not right, yet you ſhall have men that are for that way, what ever bleſſing comes upon a Nation, they will interpret it as the fruit of that. I, but this will come to nothing.

4.
Interpre-
tation of
Gods
bleſſings
in it.

And then fifthly, The fifth Lye, was, *Thoſe falſe reports that came to them againſt thoſe that did oppoſe their way of falſe wor- ſhip*: there were many that would not yield to the way of falſe worſhip, and upon that reports were raiſed upon them, what kind of men they were, and what they had done, and when theſe reports were brought to them of the other way, Oh they did them good at their hearts, I but, *You have eaten the fruit of lyes*: many mens Break-faſts, and

5.
Reports
of the cō-
trary par-
ty.

Dinners, and Suppers are nothing else but lyes. Surely now this will breed no good nourishment. And what's the reason that we have such a deal of ill blood among us? It is, because that men have such course food as they have.

Because thou didest trust in thy way, and the multitude of mighty men.

Israel (the ten Tribes) had two great Confidences that re expressed in this latter part of the 13. Verse.

1. *The Confidence of their Way.*
2. *And the Confidence of their Mighty Men.*

Now the Way in which they did trust was, the Way of Religion that they chose to themselves, that way that was distinct from the way of Judah, from the true Worship of God.

And the *Mighty Men* was, the Power they had in their State.

These are two great Confidences of people.

Expos.
1. Partic.

First, *Thou didest trust in thy Way*; they were confident that was right, they were not willing to hear any thing to the contrary: And if they did, yet their hearts were so byassed by their false worship, that any thing that was said to the contrary was nothing to them, they were very confident that there was no man able to say anie thing to purpose against them, no, we have so many understanding learned men for this way, no question it is right, there's none but a company of silly, weak men that are in any other way.

Thus they trusted in their way, they please themselves, and one another, and did seek to harden themselves, and one another in their way, they have got the day, no question they have laid all upon their backs that have opposed them, there's a great deal more reason for this way than for any other. There's no way of peace to the State,

to the Kingdom, but this, that which others would have, namely to go to *Jerusalem* to worship, it's a most unreasonable way. Yea, they think that God is well pleased with their way, and they do good service in opposing and persecuting those that are not of their way; Thus they trust in their way.

From whence the Note and Point is, *That which is a mans own way he is very ready to trust in, to make much of; Whatsoever is a mans own way: we have for this a notable Scripture in the Book of Judges, 2. 19. Oh the strength of spirit that there is in men when the way is their own, saith the text there, They cease not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way. I beseech you observe it, 'tis but a several expression, own doings, and own way, the doings were their own, such things as they had contriv'd to themselves, Their own way; and then they ceased not from, they would stick to their own way, they were stubborn in their way because their way was their own, Prov 12. 15. The way of a fool is right in his own eyes; but he that hearkeneth to counsel, is wise. A fool, one that understands little, yet if the way be his own, he will not hearken to counsel, he thinks he is sure, he needs not counsel with any, he is so strong in it because it is his own way. It's a hard thing to get men out of that way that they have contriv'd to themselves in matters of Religion: and therefore it's observable what God saith of all the Heathen in Jer. 2. 10, 11. Have any of the Nations changed their gods? but my people hath (saith he.) No Nation would change their gods whom they had chose, only Gods People they were peculiar in this to make change of their God: Why? because the gods of the Nations were of their own making. What waies are of mens own that they stick exceeding much to, They trusted in their own way; as when an object is too neer the eye, the eye is not able to see it, to see any evil in it; If a foul thing be put too neer the eye, the eye cannot see it: so the evil that is neer ones self, very neer, that is ones own, that is very hard to see; and yet*

Obl.

Judg. 2.
19.Prov. 12.
15.Jer. 2. 10.
11.

opened.

simile.

what great difference is it between ones being defil'd by ones own dung, and by the dung of another? If a mans heart be engaged in a way of his own, he will be ready to father it upon God himself, and say, It is Gods way, and he will be ready to think that all other waies different from his are mens own.

No men are more ready to charge others of pride than proud men; and no men more ready to charge others of going to their own way, than those that do most stick to their own waies; it's one fruit of a mans heart sticking to his own waies and conceits, to think that whosoever differs from him, doth stick to his own conceits and his own waies. *A note of one conceited of his own way.*

It's a hard thing to make a man or woman that sticks much to their own waies, to own it that it is their own; but how ever men wil not own what is theirs, but put it upon God many times, yet the Lord he will one day discover all the waies of men, discover all the waies of men and women and shew how much is their own in it: It's a notable text for that in *Prov. 21. 2. Every way of man is right in his own eyes; but the Lord pondereth the heart,* (or the Lord weigheth the heart) for pondering and weighing is all one. Mark, every way of man is right in his own eyes, but the Lord pondereth the heart; that is, Though we chuse waies to our selves, and think they are right, and we are ready to think that our waies are Gods, that we might justifie our selves so much the more, but saith the text, *God pondereth the heart;* that is, God weigheth exactly how much there is of his own, and how much there is of our own in it, Oh! it were a happy thing if we were able to do so, it's a great part of the skill of a Christian to be able so to ponder his own waies as to know how much of God & how much of himself is in a thing. There's very few in the world knows this, there's scarce any action that the best of us do but there is somewhat of self in it, there is somewhat of God, and somewhat of self; but now here's the skill, to be able to weigh how much of God, and how much of our selves.

ſelves is in an action. It's a great ſkill that your Goldſmiths have, they can preſently tell you how much gold and ſilver is in a veſſel; an unſkilful man looks upon it and thinks it's all gold, but your Refiners will tell you even how much to a drachm is mixed with it. Oh! it were an excellent ſkil to be able in all our actions thus to ponder al our waies, to know how much of God, and how much of our ſelves is in our waies, for want of this it is that we do miſcarry ſo much in our waies as we do; every way of man is right in his own eyes, but God ponders, God weighs mens actions to ſee how much of himſelf; and how much of us there is in our actions.

But now then, Is it ſo, that it is in the hearts of men to truſt ſo much in their own way, becauſe it is their own? Oh! what a ſhame is it then that we ſhould not have our hearts cloſe with, and truſt in Gods way! Let a way be never ſo baſe and vile, yet if it be a mans own, his heart doth cloſe, and truſt, and is ſtrong in it: Oh then! when the way is apparently Gods, why ſhould we be ſo fickle and unſteadie as we are almoſt alwaies in the way of God? Make but the way of Religion to be thy own, and then thou wilt be ſtrong enough in it; but till that time is, till we have given up our Wils to the Will of God, and we have made Gods Wil to be our own Wil, we are never like to be ſtrong in the Waies of God. When there is but one Will between God and us, that Gods Will is our Will then we are ſtrong, when Gods Intereſt is our Intereſt, when Gods Glory is our Glorie then we come to be ſtrong. Oh! happie are they that have ſo given up themſelves to God, as that they look upon their own good to be more in God than themſelves, this is the work of Grace to look upon ones own good, and Wil, and comforts of our hearts and happineſs of our lives, to be more in God than in our ſelves, that's the way to perſevere in Godlineſs; as thus, As it is between man and wife; when the wife comes to make the Will of her huſband her own, then ſhe loves him ſtrongly, and conſtantly:

Uſe.

ſo.

so when Gods will is made to be our own, then we will follow Gods will strongly, and shall persevere in it. It follows;

And in the multitude of their Mighty Men.

Expos.

This made them very confident in their way: Why, they had an Army to back them, they had an Army to fight for them, to maintain that way of theirs, they had countenance from men of Power, they had strength enough to crush any that should oppose them.

Obs.

That's the Note that lies plainly before us: *When the outward strength of a Kingdom goes along with a way of Religion then men think it must needs be right, and that all men are but weak men that appears against it.* Mark the connexion: *They trusted in their way: that is, (as I find generally Interpreters go) The way of Religion.* And then, *their Mighty Men,* these two are put together: so that you see the Note is very

That way
the migh-
ty men go
that shall
be troden

evident before you, that's the way that generally men will trust in, and men will go that way; were the scale turn'd and the strength of the mighty men went another way; As now, Suppose that the strength of the Kingdom of the ten Tribes had been bent to go up to *Jerusalem* to worship, and not to worship at *Dan & Bethel*, Do you think there would have been almost any considerable party that would not have gone up to *Jerusalem*, but worshiped at *Dan & Bethel*? but when the strength of the Kingdom held the other way, when the mighty Men and the way of Religion went both in one, the generality of the people went that way that the mighty men went. This is the vanity and the exceeding evil of mens hearts, that which way soever the mighty men go, that way they will trust in. There are very few that will deliberately say so, I will go that way that I see the mightie men go in: But this is a secret byass & poise upon the spirits of men w^{ch} inclins them to harken to what may be said for that way, & not willingly to what may be said for another. And secondly, It is such a poise upon their spirits,

ſpirits, as makes them to be willing and ready to let in any probability, if there be but the leaſt probability for the way that the mighty men go on in they take in that, and when they have taken in one probability, that makes way for another, and another, and ſo they drink in more and more, & ſo com to be ſtrengthened for that way, ſo as to put off the ſtrength of any thing that can be ſaid againſt the way, except it be ſo apparent, as whether they will nor no, they muſt be forced to ſin againſt their conſciences directly if they go another way; I ſay, when the ſpirits of men are byaſſed by ſeeing the ſtrength of the Kingdom go in a way, though (perhaps) they may have ſome good lie at their hearts, yet there is that corruption in mans heart that except we can make the other way ſo cleer, that notwithstanding all ſhifts, and all kind of reasonings that may be, they ſhal be ſelf-condemned in their own conſciences, that their conſciences ſhall tell them, they go directly againſt their light, I ſay, except we can come thus, we cannot prevail with mens hearts, when the ſway of a Kingdom goes another way. And there are many Truths of God that concerns his Worſhip, that cannot be made ſo cleer but that a man may have ſuch a diverſion to ſatiſſie his conſcience in this, That I in going another way, do not go againſt my conſcience; God would have us, that what is moſt likely to be his mind that way to go, without any conſideration of any outward reſpects. Now if there be a temptation for outward reſpects that they will come into the ballance, do but turn the ballance; and ſuppoſe in your own heart that all outward reſpects were in the other ballance, that all the mightie men were of the other way, what would your hearts think? In *Revel. 13. 3.* That when Power and Authority was given unto Antichriſt, *The whol World wondered after her.* So it is ordinary, that way that the mighty men go, that way mens hearts will generally go. Oh! the little honor that Jeſus Chriſt hath by us! Our hearts are ſwayed for the moſt part by carnal Arguments, and carnal Motives.

Rev. 13.
1, 2, 3.

Again,

Again, *They trust in their way and in the multitude of their Mighty Men.*

Obs. 3.

Great Armies are the things that are the Confidence of Carnal hearts: when they can get a great Army up of a multitude of Mighty Men, let there be never such threats in the Word, yet if they think they have strength enough to bear them out, they bless themselves in that. Oh! let us take heed of this Carnal Confidence: Through Gods Mercie the Lord hath given us now, that we have the multitude of Mightie Men on our side, let us take heed that our Faith do not eb and flow as our Armies do; and I will give you one Scripture that shews how far a gracious heart is from making flesh his Arm, *Cursed is that man (you know the Scripture) that maketh flesh his Arm.* But an example of a godly man to shew how far he was from trusting in an Armie of mighty men, in 2 Chron. 14. 11. *It is nothing (saith Asa) with thee to help with many, or with them that have no power.* Why Lord, though we have no power, yet thou canst help us. Why did Asa speak thus? Had he no power? You shall find in the Chapter a little before, that Asa had five hundred and fourscore thousand valiant fighting men, Almost six hundred thousand valiant men that he had at that time when he is pleading with God, *Lord thou canst save where there is no power.* We account it a great Army, if we have twentie, or thirtie, or forty thousand men; he hath almost six hundred thousand men, and yet goes to God and praises, *Lord, thou canst help where there is no power.*

And yet further from the connexion of these two.

Their way in which they trusted.] That is, The way of Religion, they thought that was good; But had they had nothing else to trust in but that, their trust would not have been very sure.

Obs. 4.

From thence the Note is this, *That those who trust to any way of their own, had need of creature strengths to uphold them.* It's a Note of very great use, they had need of bladders to be under their arm-holes, if they trust in a way of their own

own. But now if the Way be the Way of God that a man hath confidence in, why then though all outward helps should fail him, though all encouragements should fail in this world, though we should see the creatures at never so great a distance, yet the heart that hath confidence in Gods way hath enough to uphold it; here's the difference between men trusting in their own way, and in Gods way. Indeed when men trust in their own way so long as the Sun shines upon their way, that they have external helps, they can go on confident, but let outward helps fail, and their hearts sink within them.

But now when the heart is upright with God, and trusts in the Word, and Promises, then it is able to say with *Habakkuk*, in Chap. 3. 17. *That though the Fig-tree shall not blossom, neither the fruit be in the Vines; the labor of the Olive-should fail, and the Field should yeeld no meat, the Flock should be cut off from the fold, and there should be no Herd in the stalls; yet they will rejoyce in the Lord, and joy in the God of their salvation.* Let Heaven and Earth meet together, whatsoever becomes of Armies, and of the Policies of men, of Friends, and all outward respects; yet I will bless my self in the Lord, and bless the time that ever I knew God, and his waies, my heart yet is confident it is the way of God, and I can venture my state upon it, and my libertie, and my life and soul upon this way; let all things seem to be under a cloud and never so dismal, yet my heart is steady, and is fixed in this way of God that the Lord God graciously hath drawn my heart into.

Hab. 3. 17

The confidence of a gracious heart.

Oh! this is an excellent thing. Examine your hearts in that; when at any time you have seen things go very cross, yet then whether you have not had your hearts to shake.

Use.
Examine.

I remember it's an Observation that one hath about *John Baptist*. After he was cast into prison, he sends two of his Disciples to know whether Christ were the Messias, or no: They think that though before he was cast into prison he did know that he was so; *Behold the Lamb of God!* but when

John Baptist.

when men
suffer for a
way, then
they begin
to question
it.

once he came to sufferings, some think that there was some shaking of his Spirit. So it is many times with men, that when they begin to set upon a way and things do somewhat shine upon them, and they have some encouragements outwardly, then they go on, and are perswaded that it is a right way; but when things fall cross, that they are like to suffer in that way, and the hearts of men are against it, and they are like to meet with more evils than ever they made account of, then they begin to call things into question, And is this the right way? Oh! it is a sign that there was much failing in thy heart (at first) when in the time of outward afflictions thou comest to call into question whether it be the way of God, yea or no. It follows.

VER. 14.

Therefore shall a tumult arise among thy people; and all thy fortresses shall be spoiled.

Expos.

AS if the Prophet should say, you have the *Militia* on your side, and you think you shall be able to drive on your design, this your trust is, you have all the strength with you: but (saith he) what if there should be seditious tumults within you; What if the power of the enemy without you should not come upon you, cannot God work your ruin that way that you think not of; Oh! how suddenly may God suffer the discontentments of people to break forth into rage and fury so that a tumult should arise among them, to make tumults and bring all into a most miserable confusion. It's a great fruit of the wrath of God and a plague upon a City or Country when God shall suffer tumults to arise among them. *Therefore shall a tumult arise among them:* as a threatening of Gods severe wrath among these people that were so confident in their way. A man may avoid external dangers for his body, yea, but the distempers within his body may be his death. There's fearful miseries comes upon Cities and Countries

Obs. Tumults a token of the great wrath of God.

when.

when tumults riſe, and there are theſe two main things that have been the cauſe of tumults.

First, *Great Oppreſſions*

The Cauſes.

Secondly, *Engaging numerous parties in matters Controverſal.*

1.
2.

Theſe going both together are very dangerous, for men they will carry on what they have begun, if once they be engaged in it. To engage a rude multitude in a buſineſs eſpecially if it be controverſal, it's a very dangerous thing; for they being once engaged we do not know what they may do to purſue and follow their engagements, the evil it is inconceivable. When the multitude is in a rage, they are like to a tiled houſe that is on fire; when houſes are on fire in the Citie the great part of the evil is, if the flame have gotten to the tiles you cannot come neer the houſe the tiles flies ſo about your face: ſo it is in tumults, there's no coming neer to talk to them, to convince them, but they are ready to fly preſently upon you. And there are none ſo cruel as the vileſt of people when they are got together in a head; men of no blood care not what blood they ſhed. In Prov. 28. 3. *A poor man that oppreſſeth the poor, is like a ſweeping rain which leaveth no food.* When a poor man comes to oppreſs; it's true, Oppreſſions are great, the evil of Tyranny it's very great; but the evil of Tumults is greater than the evil of Tyrannie: We ſee it many times in men that are of mean rank, ſometimes in thoſe Committees that ſome of you complain of. Now men could bear oppreſſion a great deal more if it were from thoſe that are much above them, rather than from thoſe that are their equals, or it may be under them in eſtate, and thoſe that are moſt under men, if they come to get power any way they are like to be more oppreſſing than others: we have cauſe to bleſs God for delivering of us from tumults in this regard.

The multitude not to be engaged in matters controverſal.

An apt ſimile

None ſo cruel as the vileſt of the people when they get power. Pro. 28. 3

The evil of Tumults greater than the evil of Tyranny.

I might ſhew you moſt dreadful examples of tumults in ſtories. *Joſephus* he ſpeaks of many; for when God was

about to destroy the *Jews* at last by the *Romans*, their utter ruin was prepared by tumults and seditions that were among themselves. In his second Book of the *Jewish Wars* the 11. Chap. he speaks of one *Eleazar*, and *Alexander* that raised a Tumult, and murdered as they went, men, women, and children, and so made havock of the Country, that the Nobles of *Jerusalem* were fain to come out cloathed with sackcloth and ashes upon their heads to beseech them that they would have pitie upon their Country, and upon their wives and children, and the Temple, The Nobles with sackcloth and ashes upon their heads came to aswage the rage of this Tumult so grievous was it. And I find in his sixth Book and 11. Chap. another story of Tumults and seditious Spirits, that they being in some straights for food if there were but any places in the City that had their doors shut up they did suspect there was meat and would presently break in, and as soon as ever they came in, catch whosoever they found by the throat so as to take the meat out of their very mouths that was half chewed, they would not stand to ask them whether they had any thing or no but would run and catch them by the throat and pull the meat half chewed out of their mouths, and if any of them should let it go down before they could get hold upon their throats they would use them most cruelly for doing so. And in another place he tells that the Citizens suffered more by them than when the Enemies took it; so that when the enemies took it they thought that it was rather a relieving of their miserie, than bringing evil upon them, because the evil of the Tumults was so great among them. My Brethren, we should rather bear much than be any fomenters of the raising of Tumults, take heed of that, you know not what the end of such things will be, *A Tumult shall arise among them.* In *Amos*, 2. 2. *Moab shall die with Tumult.*

Joseph. de
bell Iudic.
l. 2. c. 11.

Lib. 6.
Cap. 11.

Take heed
of being
occasion
of tumults
Amos, 2. 2

Expos. 2.

When God intends the sorest scourge of all, utterly to destroy a people, he suffers Tumults to be among them. I find

find ſome take this word *Tumult* [*A Tumult ſhall ariſe*] that is only meant the Confuſion of the hearts of people when the enemies ſhould come upon them, that they ſhould be all in a Confuſion, not knowing what to do through fear and terror altogether. As ſuppoſe on a ſudden an Army ſhould come againſt a Citie, people would be wringing of their hands and running up and down from place to place, and paleneſs in their countenances, and not knowing what in the world to do, all in a perplexity and tumult: Thus God threatens it ſhould be with them. As if he ſhould ſay, You are jolly and brave now, but when the *Aſſyrians* come out upon you then your hearts ſhall fail, and you ſhall all run together and not know what to do, the women and children ſhall cry, not knowing how to help your ſelves, and ſo ſhall be brought into a confuſed Tumult. This is the ſenſe that ſome carries it in. But the ſenſe may very well go either of theſe waies.

It is a mercy that God hath not tried us this way; We live in our houſes, and follow our tradings, and lie down and ſleep in quietneſs and riſe again, but we cannot imagine what woful diſtractions there would be in the ſpirits of people in the Citie, if there were a conſiderable Army encamped round about it: Perhaps ſome of you here have been in places where the enemies have come ſuddenly ſo that you know what this Tumult in the ſpirits of men and women means. Bleſs God (I ſay) that the Lord hath delivered us from ſuch Tumults as theſe: And the Power and Providence of God in Government of the World by a few, in keeping people from Tumulting, and ſo bringing all to Confuſion, it is to be acknowledged, and his Name to be ſanctified.

The word that is tranſlated *Tumult*, it doth indeed ſeem to import this, *The crying of fearful creatures*, thoſe that are terrified and ſcar'd, it ſignifies the crying out of them. Oh! 'tis a great mercie for the heart of a man to be ſo ſtabliſhed that when all dangers ſhall be apprehended, yet they can find

*Clamor
timor
meticuloſo-
rum terri-
torum.*

find their hearts fixed in God, and not in a tumultuousness
 Pf. 112.7 presently. A righteous man, it's said of him in *Psalms*, 112.
 7. That when he hears ill tydings, his heart is fixed : but
 it is a greater blessing, that when we see the Armies before
 us, and hear the neighings of Horses, and clattering of the
 Speers, then to be fixed. Oh ! we should labor in the time
 of peace to make our calling and election sure. In *Psalms*,
 Pf. 57.7. *My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed, I will sing and*
give praise. Awake my Glory, awake Psaltry and Harp, I my self
will awake early, I will praise thee, O God, &c. When was
 this that *David* cries to awake, and to give Glorie to God,
 and sing praise, and that his heart was fixed ? It was when
 illustrated *Saul* perlecuted him, it was when he was in danger of his
 life, when *Saul* pursued him to take away his life, yet, *My*
heart is fixed, my heart is fixed, I will sing and give praise (saith
 Pf. 46. *David*) even at that time. So in *Psal.* 46. 2, 3. *We will not fear*
though the earth be removed, though the mountains be carried in-
to the midst of the Sea, though the waters thereof roar and be trou-
bled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.
 This Psalm was wont to be called *Luthers Psalm*, for in
 times of trouble he would say, Come and let us sing the
 46. Psalm. Many Scriptures we might have to this purpose.
 Archime- I remember the storie of *Archimedes*, that when the Citie of
 des. *Siracuse* was taken, and the enemies came in with their
 drawn swords and hack'd and slew whom they pleased,
 and abundant of blood-shed there was; yet he was so settled
 upon the drawing of his Lines (being a Mathematicion)
 that when the Soldiers came in with their swords drawn,
 he was drawing his Lines about his Art. Which of you
 could, if you were at prayer, or any serious duty, if you
 should hear of the breaking in of Adversaries, Could you
 have your hearts fixed in a settled constant way, fixed upon
 God in such a time as this is ?

A Fixed
heart in
prayer.

Spiritual
Tumults

As outward Tumults in Cities and Countries are very
 great evils, so are likewise *Spiritual Tumults* in the heart,
 when God seems to come against the Souls as an enemy, I
 have

have a place for *ſpiritual Tumults*, that is, the trouble and deſtruction of the heart in the time of the apprehenſion of Gods abſence: in *Pſal. 40. 2.* He brought me up (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) out of an horrible pit. Now the word is in the Original the very ſame word we have here, *From the pit of Tumultuousneſs.* Oh! it's true, as if he ſhould ſay, my heart was fixed indeed, yet at other times I found my heart in a tumultuous condition when I apprehended God not coming in according as I expected, yea but the Lord did bring me up out of the pit of tumultuousneſs. Oh! hath not this been the condition of ſome of you in time of trouble of your ſpirit, when you have apprehended the abſence of God from you? Your hearts have been all in a tumult, hath the Lord delivered you? Remember the *Pſalm*, *The Lord hath delivered me out of the pit of tumultuousneſs; I was in a tumultuous condition, my heart was even overwhelmed, but the Lord hath delivered me out of the pit of tumultuousneſs.* And then in *Pſal, 61. 2.* *From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed; Lead me to the rock, that is higher than I.* Remember that Scripture like-
 wife.

Pſ. 40. 2.

מבול
פועה tu-
multus.

Pſ. 61. 2.

And all thy fortrefſes ſhall be ſpoiled.

What are ſtrong holds for the ſafeguard of a people when the ſtrong God is againſt them? You have made Lines, and Fortifications, Oh! but the ſtrong God is againſt you. In *Nabum. 3. 12.* *All thy ſtrong holds ſhall be like Fig-trees, with the firſt ripe figs, if they be ſhaken they ſhall even fall into the mouth of the eater.*

Nab. 3. 12.

And now my Brethren, bleſſed be God we know this Scripture to be true in a way of mercy, God hath made our enemies ſo to us, and not in a way of Judgment: God might have made our ſtrong holds ſo to them, this Scripture might have been fulfilled thus, *All thy Fortrefſes ſhall be ſpoiled*, that is, though we have made Fortrefſes we might have

Applied.

Bristol

have heard, first, of this strong hold spoiled, and the other strong hold in such a place spoiled, this Castle taken, and the other Castle taken, and we might have even been amazed with the news, and have said, How doth God fight against us, that though we had such strong holds, and men enough to man them, yet for all that they might have been but as the first ripe figs that being shaken fall into the mouth of the eater? How were our hearts dejected when we heard but of one strong hold being taken from us, (*Bristol*) But I say through Gods mercy this Summer the Lord hath made this text good unto us, all *thy strong holds*, not all *ours*, but all the *Enemies*: How have they been spoiled generally? Oh! the Lord hath appeared glorious this way, and hath made this last Summer to be a continual miracle of mercy to us in this very thing, *All thy Fortresses shall be spoiled*. It follows.

As Shalman spoiled Beth-arbel.

Expos. 1.
Sicut va-
stus est
Salmana
à domo ejus
qui vindi-
cavit Baal
in die pre-
lij &c.
vulg. Sic
fere Græc.
Ps. 83. 11
לְנִינִי
לְנִינִי

Hierom reades it, As *Salmana* was destroyed by the house of him that vindicated *Baal* in the day of Battel. And so all that follow the old Latin, they refer this to the story that we have in *Judges*, 8. and think it hath reference to that, the story where *Gideon* slew *Zalmunnab* the Prince of *Midian*, and so they make *Arbel* to signifie the same with *Jerubbaal* though more short. And the holy Ghost doth seem to make that great Judgment of God upon *Salmunna* to be exemplary, he makes use of it afterwards in *Psalms*, 83. 11. *Make all their Princes like Zeba and Zalmunna*. But now the letters in the Hebrew do differ here, and we do not reade of *Gidion* though he did use very much severity upon *Zeba* and *Zalmunna*, yet we do not reade that he dashed the mother upon the children.

Expos. 2.
Luther,

But *Luther* thinks that It is meant of some notable act of cruelty upon some that was very neer to them; but the particulars whereof we have not recorded in Scripture, but only

only here mentioned, ſome notable execution of Juſtice it was upon a City *Beth-arbel* not long before, that God ſets forth as an example of his moſt dreadful wrath that they might expect againſt themſelves; this *Beth-arbel* we find it not in the Canonical Scripture but in *1 Maccab. 9. 2.* we find mention of ſuch a place, and afterwards it was very famous for the great overthrow that *Alexander the Great* gave to *Darius*, ſo that it is as if the holy Ghoſt ſhould ſay, Did you not hear of that horrid ſavage ſlaughter that *Shalman* cauſed in *Beth-arbel* when the mother was daſhed in pieces upon her children, they had no pity of any ſex or condition, the tender hearted mother imbracing of her children ſhe was daſhed in pieces upon them; ſuch dreadful wrath of God your *Bethel* may expect, for ſo he alludes to that.

Beth-arbel ſignifies the *House of the inſnaring god*, the god of *Policie*, and *Subtiltie*, it ſeems the people that call'd this City by this Name, they had a god that they honored for the god of *Subtilty*, that would enſnare all their enemies they thought, and ſo they truſted in this god. And upon that called the City *Beth-arbel*, the houſe of the *Inſnaring god*. But now this would not do, the more they fought by ſubtilty to undermine their Enemies, the more were their Enemies enraged, and therefore when they came upon them they ſpoiled them, and daſhed the Mother upon her own Children.

We might from this very word take notice of ſuch a meditation as that, *That we ſhould not think by our plots and policies to prevail, if God be againſt us.* Do not think to put off God by plots and policies and to avoid dangers that way; this people did ſo becauſe they had a *Beth-arbel*, a God of Policy, they thought to prevail, but their miſery was ſo much the greater. Mothers and Children were daſhed in pieces one againſt another. If you make *Arbel* your God, Policy to be your God, you may expect ſo much the more rage of God, and of the Instruments of His wrath againſt you.

1 Maccab. 9. 6.

At *Bethel*
Alexander
overthrew
Darius.

As if it
were בית
מרחץ
dei inci-
datorum.
The god
of ſubtilty

Obſ. I.

Use

And let men take heed how they seek to deceive & cozen other men, for there is no such way to encourage one man against another as this is, when a man sees that he is sought to be undermined by policies, do not deal by that way with your friends, acquaintance, and neighbors, you will encourage them so much the more.

Obs. 2.
Psa. 137.
ult.

But Oh ! the fury and rage of War when God lets it out, to dash Mother against Children. We read in Psa. 137. concerning the children of Idolaters, that when the Lord lets out his wrath upon the parents, he will let it out upon the children too, *Happy shall be he that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.* It's a very strange phrase. And in Isa. 13. 16. *Their children shall be dashed in pieces before their eyes.* I remember Urſine in his Comment upon that place of

Isa. 13. 16

Urſin. in
Isa.

Isa. he quotes this 137. Psa. and he hath first this Note, That though God doth thus execute his Wrath, yet usually because it is so dreadful and there is so much savageness in the thing in mans eye, therefore God doth use to do it by wicked men, and we never read that he made use of his own Saints to execute that wrath. And then he answers that doubt, I, but is it not said in the Psalm, *Blessed are those that dash their little ones against the stones,* it may seem that it is approved of? Now that is his answer, and Calvins, and others, that he doth not mean *Blessed*, that is, That they are blessed in their persons, or eternal blessings of Mercy; but it is a Prophetical wish that they might have success in the work, that they might have the blessing of success in the work, as an execution of Gods Wrath, and Gods Justice, though the Instruments did sin in it, they did it to execute their savage cruelty, yet the Prophet doth look upon the Justice of God in it, and wishes success unto them in such a work as that is, that the Justice of God may go on and have its course, speaking in the way of a Prophetical spirit.

Pf. 137. ult.
expounded
Calvin

Obs. 3.

The sins of parents (you may see) many times comes upon little ones. What hath the poor Infant done? Oh ! you tender-hearted

hearted mothers, conſider of this, how far your ſin may reflect upon your children: If ever you ſhould ſee bloody Soldiers to come in in a terrible way, (as ſometimes you have had ſears that way) and daſh you upon your children, conſider this is your ſin that hath done it.

But you will ſay, *Shall the children ſuffer for the Fathers ſin?* Object.

Do not we read that God will viſit the ſins of Idolaters unto the third and fourth Generation? Indeed were your children innocent, had they no original ſin, then it were another matter; but now conſidering they have enough in them to make them ſubjects of Gods wrath, God may take advantage the rather becauſe of thy ſin, and therefore take heed, and eſpecially take heed to Gods Worſhip, for we do not find in Scripture where any children are ſo threatned as the children of Idolaters are.

Anſw.

And then a further Note is this, *That the Judgments of God neer to us ſhould awaken us*; we ſhould think, Why may it not be upon our ſelves? This was a heavy Judgment of God upon ſome City neer, and God would awaken them, Oh! what have we heard hath been upon our Brethren in other parts, and we have been ſottiſh, and not ſenſible of it becauſe it hath not juſt come upon our Gates; the Lord expects when we hear of any dreadful evil upon others, that we ſhould tremble and fear before him. And then one thing further note from hence.

Obſ. 4.

Applic.
to Engl.

As Shalman ſpoiled Beth-arbel.

The word that is here *Shalman*, it ſignifies the name of one that is peaceable; one that is peaceable, and yet he ſhall exerciſe his cruelty ſo, as to daſh the Mother upon her Children, this is not one that bears cruelty in his name, not a Tyger, but a *Shalman*, a peaceable man as his name carries it, and yet thus cruel when he comes to have power?

Pacificus
שלמן
שלמן
pacē colere.

Oh! men who have peace in their names, and peace in their mouths, and peace in shew, yet when they come to have power often times are very cruel; We were like to have found it so, if our adversaries should have prevailed, especially this Citie might have been made a Beth-arbel, & Mothers dashed upon their Children. It's true, when the adversaries did prevail in any place they did not do so, but it was not through any ingenuity or pity, but out of fear, but had they gotten the day then we might have expected even dashing of the Mother against the children.

VER. 15.

So shall Bethel do unto you, because of your great wickedness.

S*o shall Bethel.] What shall Bethel rise up against the rest of the ten Tribes, and come and destroy Mother and Children together? That's not the meaning.*

Expos.

But Bethel shall do it; that is, Bethel is the Cause of this, that dreadful slaughter that is like to be among you it shall come from Bethel. Who would ever have thought that?

Obl. 1.

Oh my Brethren! Miserable Judgments do many times arise from causes we little think of: that's the Note from thence. I say, miserable Judgments do many times arise from causes we little think of, From Bethel there should come this slaughter and dreadful blood-shed. And as that Note more generally, so more particularly this;

Obl. 2.

That from places of Idolatry comes the greatest evils to Kingdoms. As 'tis very observable on the contrary, from the places of Gods Worship comes the greatest good, so from places of Idolatry the greatest evil. In Psal. 76. 2, 3. In Salem is his Tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion: There brake be the Arrows of the Bow, the Shield and the Sword, and the Battel. Did God break them there? Was there a Fight in Zion, and in Salem? No, that's not the meaning, but in Zion and

Psa. 76. 2,
3. opened.

Salem

Salem where Gods Tabernacle was, thoſe Servants of God that were worſhiping of God in *Jeruſalem*, and in *Zion*, and praying to God they got the Victory: ſo we may ſay that ſuch a place that was faſting and praying in the time of our battels, there God brake the Arrow and the Bow, in that place where they were praying and ſeeking God, it was in *Salem* and *Zion*: Where the true worſhip of God is, from thence comes the good of a Kingdom. And ſo in *Iſa. 31. 9.* *Whoſe fire is in Zion, and whoſe furnace is in Jeruſalem*: The Lord is there threatning the Enemies of his people, and he ſaith, That his fire is in *Zion*, and his furnace is in *Jeruſalem*, there God hath his furnace and from thence it ſhall go to deſtroy the adverſaries. And ſo on the contrary, where Idolatry is ſet up, and falſe worſhip maintained, from thence comes evils and miſeries upon us.

Applied.

Iſa. 31. 9.

Because of your great wickedneſs.

The word is, *Because of the wickedneſs of your wickedneſs*, ſo the Hebrews expreſs the ſuparlativ degree, by a genetive caſe, the evil of the evil, the wickedneſs of the wickedneſs. From whence obſerve,

מפני
רעת
רעתכם

Other ſins are great ſins, but this of falſe worſhip indeed is THE great ſin that God is provoked againſt a people for. Whence, let us not make light account of the Worſhip of God, for how little ſoever Gods Worſhip is in our eyes, yet it is a great matter in Gods eyes, and though you think that the ſins againſt God in the matter of his Worſhip be but ſmall, yet God ſaith, it is the great wickedneſs, it is the wickedneſs of wickedneſs: And great wickedneſs it may be call'd not only in reſpect of the nature of it, but from many aggravations, and long continuance in it, notwithstanding all their means.

Obſ. 1.

You may Note further from hence; *God takes notice not only of mens ſins, but of the aggravation of their ſins.* Oh! let us do thus, do not only look upon your ſins and acknow-
ledg

Obſ. 2.

ledg your selves to be sinners, but look upon the Aggravations of your sins; Oh! this sin committed against so many Mercies, so many Prayers, and Resolutions, and Vows, and Covenants, and so many Deliverances that I have had; labor to lay the Aggravations of your sins upon your hearts, and this is the way to humble your hearts before the Lord. Indeed the Saints of God they need not seek to excuse their sins, be not afraid to lay the aggravations of sin upon your own hearts, according to what great aggravations there may be. Greaten your wickedness before the Lord, do not so as ordinarily people do, to extenuate your sins, for if there be any extenuation that possibly can be Jesus Christ will find out that in his pleading, Christ is your advocate who sits at the right hand of the Father, and it is his work to plead your cause, and therefore if there can be any thing to extenuate a sin he will do it; you know that when he was here in this world, when his Disciples did offend very much in that sleepiness of theirs, that when Christ was to suffer they could not watch with him one hour, that sin might have been aggravated with abundance of circumstances, but saith Christ, *The flesh is weak, but the spirit is willing*; he falls to extenuate and excuse. Now that which Christ did there, he will be ready to do in Heaven, for thou that art a Saint.

Matth.
26. 41.
illustrated.

Obs. 3.

And then further, *According to greatness of sins so is the greatness of wrath*; great wickedness and great wrath they go together, and therefore according to the greatness of sins should the greatness of our humiliation be. For so it is said of *Manasses*, That he humbled himself greatly, and in *Lament. 1. 20.* where the Church is humbling its self before God for the great wickedness and the great wrath that was upon them. Behold, *Oh Lord, for I am in distress; my bowels are troubled, mine heart is turned within me; for I have grievously rebelled.* Mark, here you have these two points together, The Church aggravates her sin, *I have grievously rebelled*; and what then? *Oh Lord, I am in distress; my bowels are troubled*

Lam. 1.
20.

1.
2.

bled, my heart is turned within me. Oh! remember this text you whose consciences do tell you of grievous Rebellions. The last words follow;

In a morning ſhall the King of Iſrael be utterly cut off.

Now for the underſtanding of this, we muſt conſider to what this refers, what King of Iſrael this was, and when this was fulfilled. For that if you reade 2 King. 17. it hath reference to the ſtory there; and this King of Iſrael that is here ſpoken of, is *Hoſhea* that was the laſt King of Iſrael, and therefore it's ſaid, *That he ſhall be utterly cut off*: For he, and all his family was utterly cut off, there was an end of the Kingdom of Iſrael that had continued ſo long provoking God; ſaith he, I have forborn the Kings of Iſrael a long time, but now they ſhall be utterly cut off in *Hoſhea*. 2 King. 17. Expoſ.

This King of Iſrael his ſpirit was ſtout enough againſt God and his Prophets, and he would, and he would. My Brethren, It is not the ſtoutneſs of the greateſt men upon earth to ſay, They will, and they will, and they will venture their Lives, and Kingdoms. Why, if they Will, God Will too, he hath a Will as well as they, at length Gods Will grows as ſtrong as theirs, and proceeds againſt them, and againſt their very families: *The King of Iſrael ſhall be utterly cut off.* *Hoſhea the laſt King of Iſrael a wilful man*

Kings of the Earth they ſuffer little from men. What a brave buſineſs is it for a man that he ſhall be able to go up and down in Countries, and rend, and tear, and oppreſs, and bring thouſands into woful miſeries and extremities, and yet be afraid to ſuffer nothing at all Himſelf, therefore it is fit for God to take in hand thoſe men that are above the power of men; when men cannot deal with them, it is the Lord himſelf he takes them into hand, and they are ſo much the more under the immediate Juſtice of the Infinite God.

Shall

Shall be utterly cut off.

Expos. 1. But when shall this be? In a morning: There is a sad morning coming.

The Exposition of this part of this Verse, as of many other particulars in these Exercises, appears to have been very Prophesies.

But I find Cyril carries it thus: God in his Patience is compared to a man asleep, and in the execution of Judgment is said to awake; God brings his Righteous Judgments to light every morning. But that's a little too forced.

But Secondly, In a morning: that is, Early, betimes; so in Jer. 21. 12. O house of David, thus saith the Lord, Execute Judgment in the Morning. So the King of Israel shall be early cut off; And indeed this King of Israel he was early cut off, he did not reign above eight or nine yeers at most. God doth take some in the morning of their time, in their youth, when their day is but as it were dawning, he takes some sinners sooner than others: In the morning he shall be cut off.

Expos. 3. But Thirdly, In the morning, which comes yet neerer and more full to the sense and the scope of the Spirit of God here; that is, even when the light comes, when they have hopes of further good, then he shall be cut off. And so you shall find if you read the story in the book of Kings, at this time when Hoshea was to be cut off, that it was when he had entred into League with the King of EGYPT, and now Hoshea thought a morning would arise, and he should have a brave day, and live many merry daies now; and when he thought the light began to come, in a morning doth God come to cut him off.

Obs. Oh! so it is many times (my Brethren) That at that time when people have some enlightening, and they think that now light is breaking out, when after a long night of darkness, then Gods displeasure breaks forth upon them.

We cannot but acknowledge that the Lord hath granted us a morning light, but let us fear and tremble; for the time of Gods displeasure, somtime it is in the morning; when we think we have light breaking forth, God may have other waies to bring darkness

Use for
England,

darkneſs upon us than we are aware of ; we know how dreadful a day it was with *Sodom* after a Sun-ſhine morning. It's very observable, the difference of Gods dealing with his own People, and with thoſe that are carnal and of the world : compare this Scripture with *Zach. 14. 7.* Here, *In a morning ſhall he be utterly cut off.* But in *Zach. 14. 7.* where God is ſpeaking of mercy to his People, he ſpeaks of a day that ſhould be known to God, and ſaith he, *At the evening time it ſhall be light ;* He comforts his People thus. But when he threatens the wicked (ſaith he) *When the morning comes it ſhall be darkneſs.* The Lord doth uſe to turn the darkneſs of the Saints into light, and to turn the light of the wicked and ungodly into darkneſs. Oh ! let us learn to fear that God then that is able to turn light into darkneſs, and darkneſs into light. *Amos, 5. 8.* *Seek him* (ſaith the text) *that turneth the ſhadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night.* He can turn the ſhadow of death into morning. Suppose there be the greateſt darkneſs upon you, God can make that a morning of light : and ſuppoſe there be a morning of light, God can turn that into darkneſs. Many men they ſet upon ſome waies, and becauſe they have a morning they bleſs themſelves and think all muſt needs go on according to their way ; it is a very ordinary thing in the hearts of men, eſpecially that are compaſſing ſome notable deſign of their own, if it doth proſper in the begining they think al wil go on : Oh ! thou maielt be utterly deceived, thy deſigns may have a morning, and then God may cut thee off and thy deſigns, and all thy thoughts may then periſh. We reade that *Saul* had many Victories after that God had pronounced that he ſhould be rejected. And therefore we had need fear that God, that can turn the morning into darkneſs, and darkneſs into light.

Fourthly, God did not diſcomfit the Hoſt of the *Egyptians* until the morning. God loves to draw forth great ſinners to the light ; not to come upon them in the dark,

but to bring forth his judgments in the morning openly and cleerly.

Obs. 5. And lastly, *In the morning he shall be cut off.* That is, Suddenly, God will be quick at his work : They thought by their power to hold it out : No, saith God, I will not make a daies work of it, it shal be in the *morning*, so the old Latin turns it, *It shall pass as the morning*, as the light of the morning quickly passes over ; as you heard before, as the King of Israel is compared to the *foam*, so he is here compared to the *morning*. Now my brethren to close this

*sicut mane
transit, sic
pertransit
Rex Israel*

Ezek. 7. 5, 6, 7. *saith the Lord God, An evil, an only evil, behold, it come. An end is come, the end is come, it watches for thee, behold, it is come. The Morning is come unto thee, O thou that dwellest in the Land ; the time is come, the day of trouble is near. As if God should say, Al this while that thou hast bin in the act of the pride of thy heart, and vanity of thy spirit, I did determin, that such a morning, such an evil should come, and it's come, it is come, it is come, saith God : Again, again, and again, the morning is come. O ! think, when you lie down at night, think what thou hast done this day, do not dare to lie down, but first make thy peace with God, thou knowest not what may be in the morning, and when thou risest up in the morning, look up to God, and seek blessing and mercy from the Lord ; for though thine eyes be opened, and thou come to see the morning light, yet before the morning be quite gone, thou knowest not what may befall thee,*

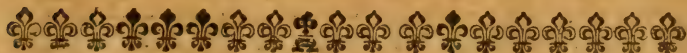
*Make our
peace at
night,*

*And seek
God when
we rise.*


thee,

thee, and therefore ſeek to make thy peace with God, both in the night and in the morning; for great changes may come to thee both in the night and in the morning, that thou never thoughteſt of in all thy life. And thus (through Gods bleſſing) we have finiſhed the Tenth Chapter.

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